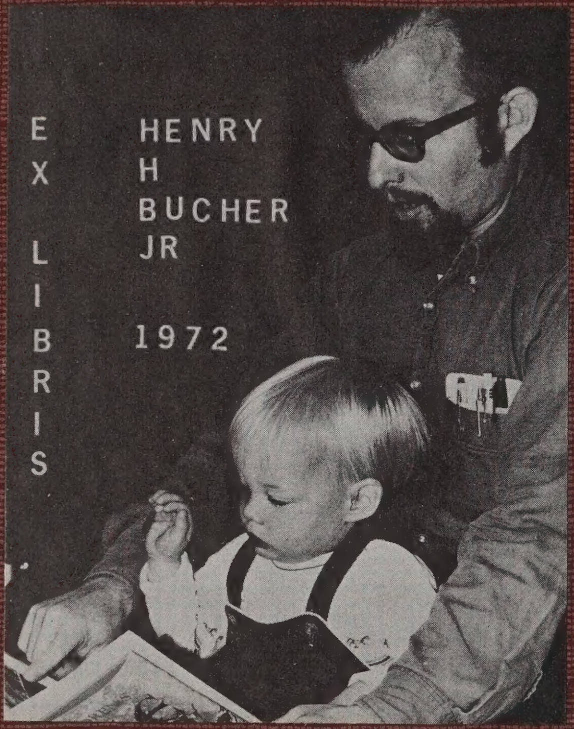
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Blood-brothers

BLOOD-BROTHERS

An ethno-sociological study of the institutions of blood-brotherhood with special reference to Africa

by

HARRY TEGNÆUS

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Printed in Sweden

Victor Pettersons Bokindustriaktiebolag
Stockholm 1952

To my wife

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PREFACE

It is inevitable that there should be deficiencies in an account of a practice extending over such a vast area. I have endeavoured to fill in some of the lacunæ through correspondence with many social anthropologists and missionaries who have been in a position to observe customs associated with the exchange of blood.

I am indebted to Professor *I. Schapera,* University of London, for information from his researches among the Tswana tribes. I have also received much valuable information about tribes in south-eastern Africa from Prof. *J. D. Krige,* University of Natal, Prof. *M. Gluckman,* University of Manchester, Prof. *M. Wilson,* Rhodes University, Grahamstown, and Dr. *H. Kuper,* University of the Witwatersrand.

I thank also Dr. *B. Bohannan,* Oxford, Dr. *K. A. Busia,* University College, Achimota, Dr. *F. Girling,* Gulu, Uganda, Dr. *Ph. Gulliver,* Dr. *Justine Johnson,* Nothwestern University, Dr. *G. Lienhardt,* Oxford, and Dr. *R. A. Lystad,* Northwestern University, who have carried out ethnological work in several parts of Africa and have kindly given me very valuable information.

Several missionaries have sent me helpful and courteous communications from their mission districts. I thank Rev. Dr. *Efraim Andersson,* Uppsala, Rev. *S. Axelsson,* Ouesso, both missionaries in French Equatorial Africa, Rev. *H. Benettsson,* Bukoba, Father *J. P. Crazzolara,* Cath. Mission, Arua, Uganda, and Rev. *A. Mostaert,* Arlington, who was for a number of years a missionary among the Ordo Mongols.

I should also like to thank respectfully Prof. *G. Lindblom* for the kind interest he has always shown and for the offer extended by him and Dr. *S. Linné* to include this book in the series of the Ethnographical Museum of Sweden.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Prof. *T. Segerstedt* for the interest he has shown and the encouragement he has given me in my studies in social anthropology.

My warmest thanks are also due to various scholars and other interested persons: Prof. *Abdülkadir Inan,* Ankara, Prof. *K. Birket-Smith,* København, Prof. *W. Björkman,* Uppsala, Mr. *G. Bäärnhielm,* F. M., Uppsala, Prof. *Å. Campbell,* Uppsala, Dr. *P. Clément,* Musée de l'Homme, Paris, Prof. *W. Eberhard,* University of California, Prof. *Fred Eggan,* University of Chicago, Miss *Frances Gillmor,* University of Arizona, Dr. *Å. Hultcrantz,* Stockholm, Dr. *S. Lagercrantz,* Uppsala, Dr. *B. Lindskog,* Uppsala, Dr. *Edwin Loeb,* University of California, Dr. *E. Lü-*

ders, Uppsala, Prof. *G. P. Murdock,* Yale University, Dr. *Edward Spicer,* University of Arizona, Prof. *B. Sundkler,* Uppsala, Prof. *T. Säve-Söderberg,* Uppsala and Miss *D. E. Yates* of the Gypsy Lore Society, University of Liverpool.

I am also extremely grateful to the Swedish Research Council for the Social Sciences (Statens samhällsvetenskapliga forskningsråd) for the grant which has made possible the publication of this work.

I also thank Mr. *Reginald Stedman,* B. A. and Mr. *Donald Burton* for the pains they have taken in translating the original Swedish manuscript. Mr. *Stedman* also assisted with proof-reading and the index.

Uppsala, May 1952.

Harry Tegnæus

INTRODUCTION

Before surveying the distribution of blood-brotherhood, the performance of the rite and the social implications of the practice, it may be desirable to begin with a discussion of some general points in connection with this custom. As regards, first of all, the term itself, it has rightly been pointed out that it is a misnomer, as the relationship is definitely not brotherly.[1] The essential core of the relationship between blood-brothers consists rather, as it has been expressed, of a a fiction, "as if" they were brothers.[2]

If we may venture to propose a definition of what is generally implied in the term blood-brotherhood, we might perhaps say that this practice is a pact or alliance established between two, or occasionally several, persons by a ritual act in which the participants usually mix and swallow each other's blood. Sometimes the blood of the "brothers" is mixed with some other liquid—wine, water, spirits, or the like—before they drink it. Sometimes food eaten together is impregnated with the blood. Sometimes it is enough to rub the bleeding wounds together, so that the blood of both parties is mixed and smeared upon them both.

The pact implies mutual assistance and is backed by powerful sanctions. It may entail certain obligations for the two participants only; it may also involve the social groups of which they are members. Alliances based upon the exchange of blood have been recorded from many parts of the world, but especially from Africa, where they are exceedingly common, as we shall see in the second chapter. In some African tribes the participants drink one another's blood directly from incisions made on their bodies, while in other tribes the blood is swallowed on a piece of meat or ground-nut or coffee-berry. But though the actual manner of consumption varies in different cultures, the purpose of the rite is generally the same, and there is often a marked similarity between the ways in which it is carried out.

In the many discussions of this custom, the main point of controversy has been the nature of the bond which unites blood-brothers, whether it is a bond of true kinship, or whether it is based upon homeopathic principles of magic or upon the mechanism of the curse, or whether it is constituted by a change of status or by a simple contract. A subsidiary question has been whether it is a collective alliance between groups or a personal pact between individuals.

When *R. R. Marett* was confronted with

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[1] *Hocart,* Blood-Brotherhood, *M* 35/1935, 127.

[2] *Thurnwald,* Reallexikon, 2, p. 189.

the problem in his work "Sacraments of Simple Folk," he drew attention to the importance of the blood-covenant as a form of cooperation in primitive society. He distinguished it from a contract by its voluntary nature, and asserted that it was instead really an agreement resting on moral obligation. The need for such an alliance arises, he says, in a conflict between associative and dissociative tendencies, where unusual intelligence and will are needed to bring about the necessary compromise. And when he takes up the question of the covenant as an inter-individual tie, he points out that in the background of the inter-individual ceremony lurks some half-forgotten intention to make each of the parties to the covenant an adopted member of the other's clan.[3]

In the form in which it occurs among the Semites, the blood-rite was first described by *Trumbull;* but the writer who has above all tried to explain and to theorize about this custom in the Semitic milieu was *Robertson Smith.* He also contributed to the discussion of the general significance of the rite; he asserts, among other things, that there is no kinship without community of blood, and that there are no obligations in primitive society except those of kinship. Thus anyone who wishes to enter into a reciprocal social relationship with another man who is not of his natural kin can do so only through the artificial creation of kinship. Since kinship is based upon community of blood it can be created artificially in one way only, viz., by each of the two men in question partaking of the blood of the other. Since clans are undifferentiated units, the bond between the two partners in blood-brotherhood is also a collective bond between their respective clans. In his discussion of the commingling of blood as this is practised among the Arabs, and the fiction of adoption on the strength of which a new tribesman was looked upon as the veritable son of a member of the tribe, he argues that we have here two evidences of the highest value that the Arabs were incapable of conceiving any social unity that was not based upon kinship, for a legal fiction is always adopted to reconcile an act that is at variance with a principle too firmly established to be simply ignored. But of the two forms of the fiction, that of blood-brotherhood would appear to be the older, as the first accounts of it are much earlier and as it has a manifestly primitive character. This would seem to indicate that in the most primitive ages the social bond was not necessarily dependent on fatherhood. In the case of adoption a man becomes a tribesman's son, in the case of blood-brotherhood he enters directly into the fellowship of the tribal blood as a whole.[4]

Davy adds a further conclusion to *Robertson Smith's* line of argument. He states that since in primitive communities alliances can only be made a man's entering into a kinship relationship with another, one may say that contractual ties are similar to ties of kinship, or in other words that contract is only possible through a change of status. The contractual relation between blood-brothers is an imitation of the status of kinship.[5] *Sidney Hartland* takes the same view. Like *Robertson Smith,* with his theory that the god or fetish is also made a partner to the pact, he argues that the gods were frequently made parties to the contract, and the blood of the covenanters was smeared upon the idols as well as upon one another.[6]

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[3] *Marett,* Sacraments, pp. 156 ff.

[4] *Robertson Smith,* Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, pp. 56 ff.

[5] *Davy,* La foi jurée, Chapter I.

Frazer has discussed the facts of blood-brotherhood in a wider context. He contends that blood-brotherhood is a bond created by men wishing to institute a form of contract. It derives from residual notions concerning the nature of substances. These elemental beliefs in homeopathic magic imply that in absorbing part of a man one absorbs his physical, moral and intellectual qualities, and hence one's fate becomes identified with his.[7] *Davy* accepts *Frazer's* views on the subject as complementary to those of *Robertson Smith,* since according to *Frazer* the exchange of blood is merely an application of homeopathic magic, and kinship is based upon a similar notion of physical and mystical unity. *Davy* will not, however, admit that blood-exchange is intelligible in terms of homeopathic magic alone, for he considers that the bonds of blood-brotherhood are of the same nature as the more fundamental religious and social bonds uniting family and clan.[8]

Westermarck strongly opposes the theory of *Robertson Smith* and his colleagues. He declares that their point of view presupposes that the members of a clan consider themselves to be literally of one blood, to be a physiological as well as a social unit. He criticizes them, moreover, for seeing in blood-exchange merely a crude artificial transfusion of blood. In *Westermarck's* opinion the facts do not bear out the interpretation of present-day blood-brotherhood as a survival of a previous rite of adoption into the clan. He maintains furthermore that the genuine blood-covenant imposes duties upon both parties, and also contains the potential punishment for the neglect of these duties. The covenant involves a promise, and the transference of blood is vaguely or in some cases distinctly supposed to convey to the person who drinks it or who is inoculated with it a conditional curse, which will bring injury or destruction upon him should he break his promise. That this is the main idea underlying blood-brotherhood is apparent from the fact that the pact is regularly accompanied by curses or self-imprecations. The really important element in blood-brotherhood is thus, in *Westermarck's* opinion, the curse which it pronounced over the partners, and the blood is merely a suitable vehicle for the curse.[9]

The facts of African society undoubtedly bear out *Westermarck's* contentions rather than those of *Robertson Smith* and *Davy.* The African does not regard kinship as a community of blood, and hence there is no notion of artificially creating bonds of kinship by the transfusion of blood. The African speaks of members of the same clan as having sprung from the same seed, but the filiation is not spoken of as one of blood. It is rather in terms of sociological function than in terms of physiological affinity that he thinks of his clan. It is, as a matter of fact, rather common for the African to contrast blood-brotherhood with natural kinship, extolling the former at the expense of the latter. A blood-brother is thus said to be a much better friend than a real brother. The fundamental basis of kinship is sentiment, expressing and vivifying itself in social obligations. The fundamental basis of blood-brotherhood is a legal contract. The obligations incurred towards a blood-brother are more directly binding than those towards a real brother. Blood-brotherhood is a legal contract entered into by two men of their own accord, whereas real brotherhood is a circumstance into which men are born without any active contribution of their own.

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[6] *Hartland,* The Legend of Perseus, p. 240.

[7] *Frazer,* The Golden Bough: Taboo and the Perils of the Soul, p. 130, and Spirits of the Corn, vol. II, chap. 12.

[8] *Davy,* op. cit.

[9] *Westermarck,* The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas, II, pp. 204 ff.

In this theory mentioned above *Robertson Smith* links his argument to other social phenomena, viz., sacrifice and totemism.[1] The same view has also been expressed by other scholars.[2] *E. O. James,* for instance, speaks of the blood-bond as a participation in a common vital essence concentrated in a higher unity in the sacred ally. The group is thus, he declares, united in a totemic relationship, the members becoming "all-one-flesh" in a sacramental sense; and this union is strengthened and renewed through a common meal of sacred food, in which the tribal soul-substance is present with all its potency as a consolidating and regenerative agent, binding the individuals together more firmly in a blood-brotherhood. But the communion sought is with the totem rather than with the food itself, and through the totem with the members of the totemic group in society.[3]

Further observations of a more theoretical nature have been made concerning this institution. Thus *Hocart* has expressed the opinion that covenants like blood-brotherhood are nothing but two-party rituals in which the proper purpose of creation and the pursuit of life and welfare have been replaced by an alliance for commercial or other social purposes. Covenants are thus merely rituals performed to inaugurate the relationship which is involved in every ritual. Blood-brotherhood is an interesting example, says *Hocart,* of the way in which a custom having a certain effect comes to be observed solely for that effect, so that its original purpose is narrowed down. According to this theory, blood-brotherhood provides the pattern of behaviour between two moieties: mutual aid combined with playful hostility, inter-marriage, etc.[4]

As regards African practice, at least, we have found that there is no moiety organization correlated with the institution. We shall revert to this and other questions in the last chapter.

Raymond Firth criticizes *Hocart's* views, pointing out that from the Tikopia evidence there is no moiety organization correlated with the institution. On the other hand, it is quite obvious that practical ends of confidence and assistance are served by blood-brotherhood; and it is no less clear that it provides a convenient "cross-bearing" in society from the obligations entailed by membership in family and clan. In *Firth's* opinion, the interpretation of the bond-friendship as merely a specific minimization of a more general form of covenant for the creation of ritual opposites seems to ignore the very real and immediate advantages of a psychological, economic and social kind which an institutionalized friendship provides, and the moral sanction attaching to the performance of material, non-ritual services.[5]

Many authors have stressed the fact that adoption into a peace group is sometimes attended by this ceremony or by one of the forms in which it has survived.[6] In his interesting work, "The Beginnings of Diplomacy," *Ragnar Numelin* states that the drinking or mixing of blood establishes peaceful relations between individuals, tribes and peoples. The blood-pact is also, as he points out, one of the chief factors in preventing feuds.[7]

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[1] *Robertson Smith,* loc. cit.; *Id.,* The Religion of the Semites, pp. 318 ff.

[2] *Davy,* op. cit., pp. 74 ff.; *Jevons,* Introduction to the Hist. of. Rel. pp. 96 ff.

[3] *James,* The Beginnings of Religion, p. 85; *Id.,* Origins, pp. 30 ff.

[4] *Hocart,* Blood-Brotherhood, M 35/1935, 127; *Id.,* Covenants, 164.

[5] *Firth,* Bond-friendship, pp. 268 f.

As regards Africa, we shall find that there the blood-pact played a significant rôle in connection with the conclusion of peace between tribes and with settlements concerning safe-conduct between white travellers and African negro chiefs.

Two other forms of blood-pact which have not previously been considered to any great extent have also been treated in this book. These are blood-pacts between man and woman at marriage and blood rites occuring in initiation ceremonies.

Before entering into the question of the distribution of this custom and its significance in Africa and Madagascar, we shall in the next chapter give a survey of the blood-pact as it has been observed in other parts of the world and in different epochs.

In the last section of this book we have tried to show the custom as a concomitant of social organization, and on the basis of the material we have collected to throw light upon the social implications of the practice.

[6] *Goldenweiser,* Anthropology, p. 308; *Lowie,* Social organization, p. 58.

[7] *Numelin,* The Beginnings, pp. 206 ff.

CHAPTER I

The Blood-pact outside Africa and Madagascar

Classical writers make many references to blood-pacts as practised among many nations.

As early as the fifth century B. C. we find an explicit description of the Oriental rite of the blood-covenant in the writings of *Herodotus.* He observes that the Scythians made covenants in the following manner. They made incisions in the bodies of the participants with a small knife or sword and mixed the blood received with wine in a large drinking bowl. They then dipped into the bowl a sword, arrows, battle-axe and javelin. A long curse was pronounced, and the mixture of blood and wine was drunk not only by the parties to the treaty, but also by those of the highest rank among their followers.[8]

This ceremony is represented on the clasp of a girdle or diadem from the "Kul-Oba tumulus" near Kerch. The figures appearing on the clasp represent Scythians with round vase and rhyton taking part in the ceremony described by *Herodotus. Rostovcew* declares that many such figures have been found and are to be seen in museums. They were set to the left and right of the central group on the girdle or diadem.[9] From *Lucian's* account of such a rite, which is mentioned below, it will be obvious that the two brothers both drank at once. *Herodotus,* on the other hand, makes no reference to the point that both drank from the same cup at the same time. In his translation of *Lucian's* "Toxaris," however, *Harmon* points out that this is proved by the gold plaque from the tomb of Kul-Oba, reproduced in the figure on the following page.[1]

Herodotus gives other instances. He says that the Medes and Lydians made cuts in each other's arm and licked one another's blood, and he also mentions an Arabian blood-pact in which the contracting parties drew each other's blood and smeared it on seven stones set up in their midst.[2]

There are several references to this blood-friendship by classical writers in connection with Catiline's conspiracy against the Roman Republic. *Sallust,* the historian of that conspiracy, says that when Catiline had assembled his associates he took them to a quiet part of his house and made a speech, after which he handed round human blood mixed with wine in bowls. All those present tasted of it with imprecations against them-

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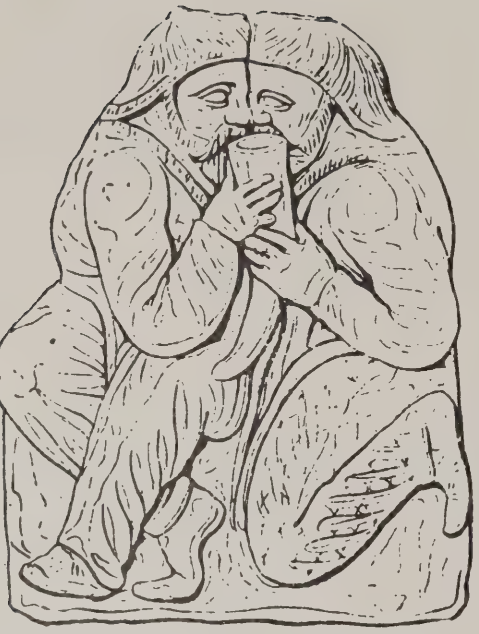
[8] *Herodotus,* Hist., IV, 70.

[9] *Rostovcew,* Iranians and Greeks, p. 106; *Minns,* The Scythians, p. 203.

[1] *Lucian,* Toxaris, transl. by *A. M. Harmon,* p. 162, n. 1; With regard to the custom of drinking out of the same cup, it may be mentioned that the Ossetes, for instance, did so when they entered into alliances. *Kovalewsky,* Coutume contemporaine, pp. 213 f.

[2] *Herodotus,* op. cit., I, 74 and III, 8; Cf. *Mela,* De situ orbis, lib. 3.



Scythian blood-brothers (after Tolstoi and Kondakow).

selves if they should betray the plot.[3] *Dion Cassius* gives it as a simple fact without comment that Catiline killed a boy, and that after the oath had been taken over the viscera he and the rest ate them.[4] *Dion* may have copied this silly story about the boy from *Plutarch*.[5] *Florus,* in his description of this conspiracy, says: "Additum est pignus conjurationis sanguis humanus, quem circulatum pateris bibere . . ." (There was added the pledge of the league, human blood, which they drank as it was borne round to them in goblets.)[6] *Tertullian* suggests that it was their own blood, mingled with wine, that the conspirators drank together.[7] There is a famous painting of the Catiline conspiracy by *Salvatore Rosa* (see the reproduction on page 21). This painting represents the covenanting by blood. Two conspirators are standing face to face, their right hands clasped above a votive altar. The bared right arm of each is incised a little below the elbow. The blood is streaming from the arm of one into a cup which he is holding with his left hand. The dripping arm of the other conspirator shows that his blood has already flowed into the commingling cup. The uplifted hand of a man standing between the conspirators seems to indicate the imprecatory vows which the two are swearing in the presence of the gods and of the witnesses standing about the altar.

An instance from Armenia quoted by *Valerius Maximus* is doubtless a case of an analogous practice. It is said that Sariaster, the son of Tigram, king of Armenia, conspired with several friends against his father: the conspirators drew blood from their right hands and then drank of one another's blood.[8]

Diodorus instances an occurrence of the blood-pact in Greece during the third century B. C. A certain Appollodorus aspired to become dictator, and wished to make sure of the allegiance of his accomplices. He invited a young man to a sacrifice, strangled him, and obliged his confederates to eat of the entrails and drink of the blood mixed with wine.[9]

The Roman historian *Tacitus* gives an account of the rite of blood-brotherhood. He tells, in his *Annals,* of one Rhadamistus, leader of the Iberians, who pretended to seek a covenant with Mithridates, King of the Armenians, to cement the peace between the two nations. In this connection *Tacitus* points out that when Oriental kings came together to make a covenant it was customary

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[3] *Sallustius,* Catilina, chap. XXII:

[4] *Dion Cassius,* 37, c. 46 a.

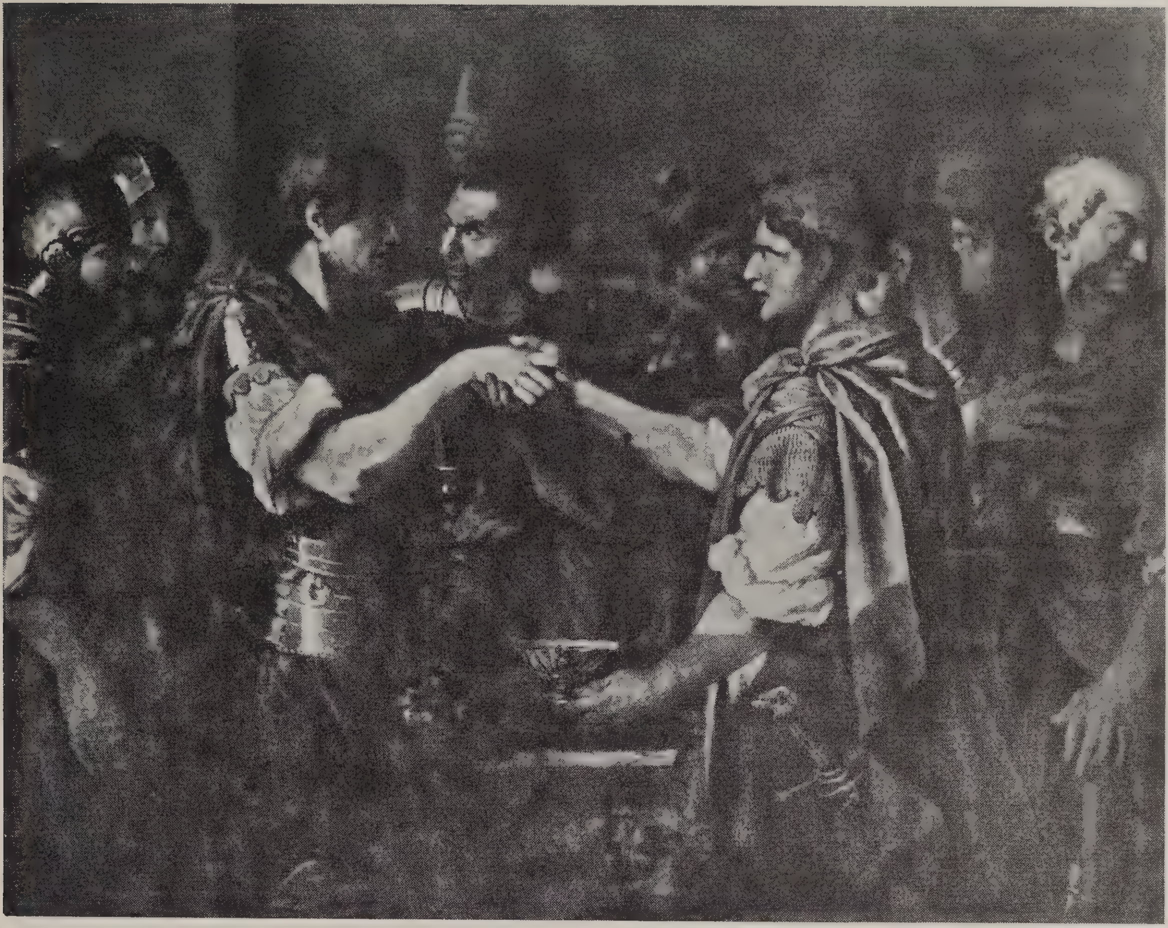
[5] *Plutarch,* Vita de Cicero, 10, 14.

[6] *Florus,* Historiæ, IV, 1.

[7] *Tertullianus,* Apologet., chap. IX.

[8] *Valerius Maximus,* IX, chap. XI, 2, 3.

[9] *Diodorus Siculus,* Opera, II, pp. 562 f.



The blood-pact between Catiline and his fellow conspirators (after Salvatore Rosa).

for them to join their right hands, tie the thumbs together and tighten them with a knot. Then, when the blood was in this way pressed to the tips, they drew blood with a light stroke and licked it in turn. They regarded this pact, says *Tacitus,* as a 'divine' covenant, made sacred, as it were, by the mutual shedding and drinking of blood.[1]

A term employed by the Romans is of interest in this connection. *Festus* is reported as saying of the blood-covenant: "A certain kind of drink, of mingled wine and blood, was called *assiratum* by the ancients; for the ancient Romans called blood *assir.*"[2]

Lucian, writing in the middle of the second century A. D., indicates the nature of blood-brotherhood as then practised in the East, and the procedure adopted in this connection. In his "Toxaris," a Scythian and a Greek are discussing friendship, and the former declares that Scythian friends are more faithful than Greek friends. And Toxaris, the Scythian, goes on to say: "But first I wish to tell you in what manner we make friends; not in our drinking bouts as you do, nor simply because a man is of the same age, or because he is our neighbour. But, on the contrary, when we see a good man, and one capable of great deeds, to him we all hasten, . . . we court him and we do all things together . . . And whenever one decides to be a friend we make the greatest of all oaths, to live with one another, and to die, if need be, the one for the other. And this is the manner of it: . . . cutting our fingers, all simultaneously, we let the blood drop into a vessel, and having dipped the points of our swords into it, both holding them together, we drink it both at the same time. There is nothing which can loose us from one another after that."[3]

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[1] *Tacitus,* Annales, XII, 47.

[2] *Harper,* Latin Dictionary: *assiratum.* Cf. *Rosenmüller,* Scholia in Vet. Test., Psa. 16: 4.

Speaking of the Carmanians, *Athenæus* says that these people were eager to prove their friendship in their drinking bouts. They opened veins in the forehead, mixed the blood streaming down in wine, and imbibed the mixture in the belief that to taste each other's blood was the highest proof of friendship.

In the poetic myths of the Norsemen there are references to a confraternity between Odin and Loke. At a banquet of the gods, Loke, who had been invited, took advantage of the opportunity to reproach his fellow-divinities for their hostility towards him, reminding them of the indissoluble tie of blood-brotherhood.[4] Men became blood-brothers by letting their blood flow together in a footprint and mingling it where it fell, or by going under the turf, *ganga undir jarðarmen,* a ceremony which we find described in the Gisla Saga. We are told there that four men who wished to swear such an oath cut a strip of turf in such a way that both ends of the strip were still attached to the ground. With a spear scored with runes they then propped it up sufficiently high for a man to lay his head on the socket of the spearhead. Under this yoke they were all four to pass. Each now bled a vein, letting his blood fall together with that of the others on the mould from which the turf had been cut. All touched it, and then fell on their knees and joined hands, each swearing to avenge the other as though he were his brother, and calling all the gods to witness the oath.[5]

Several explanations of this curious ceremony have been put forward. In *Grimm's* opinion, by placing themselves underneath the turf and falling on their knees the brothers appear to indicate their abasement before the Higher Powers, and their solemn purification from wordly things.[6] *Maurer,* on the other hand, regards the rites as an ordeal, the purpose of which was to ensure the performance of the promises made. This view seems to receive some support from the following passage in the Laxdoela Saga: "This was then the ordeal at this time, that men should pass thereunder . . . So was he cleansed who went under the earth-collar, if the turf fell not upon him."[7] *Pappenheim,* however, points out that this ceremony was used not only for making brothers and for ordeals, but also in cases where an offence had been committed and the offender was required to humble himself by going under the turf. One explanation will not suffice, he says, for all three cases, and he explains the use of the ceremony for making brothers, the mixing of the blood with the earth, as symbolizing the common origin of the brothers. They were children of one womb, they were born of one mother, the earth.[8]

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[3] *Lucian,* Toxaris, chap. 37.

[4] *Anderson,* Norse Mythology, pp. 372, 408 f.

[5] *Toivonen,* Ganga undir, pp. 77 ff.

[6] *Grimm,* Deutsche Rechtsalt., pp. 165. Cf. p. 266.

[7] *Maurer,* Die Bekehrung, II, pp. 170 f.

Objections have been raised to *Pappenheim's* interpretation by, amongst others, *Nyrop*. In his opinion the custom was a ceremony of purification. When a man's word was not believed he had to confirm his statement with a solemn assurance. But before this he had to *ganga undir jarðarmen*, i. e. wash away his sins, for a sinless man's assurance is more reliable than that of a sinner.[9]

Vogt, however, like *Pappenheim,* considers that the custom of going under the turf symbolizes rebirth. This, he argues, emerges most clearly from the ceremonies in which the covenant of brotherhood was entered into.[1]

In his study "Der altnordische Rasengang" *de Vries* agrees in part with *Pappenheim.* He, too, considers that the custom in question was not originally a solemn way of swearing an oath. He comes to the conclusion that this rite, whose purpose was to bring about blood-brotherhood, indicates that the earth, conceived as a womb, is supposed to symbolize the intimate relationship of the blood-brothers. *De Vries* thinks that the object of the loosening of a strip or turf was to make it possible for a person to enter into communication with the deceased ancestors of mankind dwelling under the earth. A stranger cannot become a member of the family, for the latter is not a social, but a natural community, into which one can only be born. This is possible only by first removing to the world of the deceased, where, by a ceremonial commingling of blood, the stranger may be received into the family. And only through the magical participation in the closed chain of the family is it possible for him to be born as a member thereof. In this way those who concluded a pact of blood-brotherhood became real brothers, members of each other's families and lines. *De Vries* adds that the swearing of oaths was very often connected with subterranean powers. He gives examples of this. Later, the original significance of this custom receded into the background; the fundamental meaning of the blood-bond was forgotten, and men began to regard the procedure simply as a method for the swearing of an oath. That *ganga undir jarðarmen* is mentioned a couple of times as a symbol for humiliation indicates, according to *de Vries,* a similarity with the Roman procedure *mittere sub jugum.*[2]

Toivonen stresses the significance of the earth-oath, and points out that such an oath first became customary among the Scandinavians in connection with the ceremonies employed for the conclusion of blood-brotherhood. In this connection the oath was of a promissory character, i. e. a character serving to confirm the promise given. Employed in cases like those found in the Laxdœla Saga, it originally had an assertory significance, i. e. confirming the truth of the words earlier pronounced by the person swearing the oath. It is from this, says *Toivonen,* that the notion of using the custom of going under the turf as an ordeal has arisen.[3]

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[8] *Pappenheim,* Die altdänischen, pp. 18 ff.

[9] *Nyrop,* Kludetræt, pp. 25 f.

[1] *Vogt,* Vatnsdœla saga, p. 88.

[2] *De Vries,* op. cit. pp. 106 ff.

[3] *Toivonen,* op. cit.

Speaking of Scandinavian society in the Viking Age, *Williams* stresses the point that in those early days of individualism and violence it was an unhappy man who had no kindred, who had to stand alone or fall alone, defeated by outrageous fortune. The man without brothers was particularly hapless, for the bonds of brotherhood were very close and dear. It was undoubtedly, *Williams* says, this recognition of the need for brothers on the part of the brotherless man which led to the institution of the system of sworn or blood-brotherhood, by which men unrelated by birth formed an artificial fraternal tie by literally mingling their blood in a solemn ceremony. The ties thus formed were as sacred and binding as those of blood relationship. In the Viking period even men having kindred of their own, including brothers, united themselves in this manner to other families of brothers. The selection of a man's sworn brother was in this case, of course, determined by the fighting strength of the family with which the union was made, as well as by affection and congeniality of temperament.[4]

There are traces of the blood-covenant in several parts of Europe. Thus the custom is mentioned in Irish sagas. An instance occurs in a tale where it is related that two men mingled their blood in a vessel in order to make a treaty. The Irish also ratified leagues by drinking each other's blood, even in Christian times. And traces of a similar custom existed in the West Highlands in the 17th century.[5]

There is also mention of an exchange of blood in the Old English versions of the Gesta Romanorum, where we read: "If so be that thou wolt do after my consaile, I pray the let me drinke thi blode, and thou shalt drinke myne in tokening that neither of us shalle forsake other, in wele ne in woo."[6]

In *Matthæus Parisiensis'* Historia Anglorum, we find the following account of a blood-pact from the year 1236. The people of Galloway, the Isle of Man and part of Ireland joined together in a league to defend the rights of one Thomas, son of the laird of Galloway, against the decision of the King of Scotland, who had divided the heritage among the three legitimate daughters of the dead laird. The conspirators and their chiefs —called by Matthæus "the barbarians"— opened veins in their chests and let the blood drop into a large bowl. They shook the bowl to mix the blood and drank from it, one after the other, as a symbol of their indissoluble alliance until death, in success as in failure.[7]

It may be pointed out that the stabbing of arms and the drinking of healths in blood to which such frequent reference is made in the works of the Elizabethan dramatists is certainly an imitation. Stabbing or dagging of arms is quoted in *Nares'* Glossary. To show their devout attachment to their mistresses, young men often punctured their arms with daggers, and mingling the blood with wine, drank it off to their mistresses' healths.[8]

During the age of Chivalry, the fraternity of arms was established by the custom of the new brothers drinking each other's blood. There are references in the literature of *l'ancienne chevalerie* to blood-rites. For instance, in Le Roman de Lancelot du Lac, it is mentioned that they bled together and mixed the blood. *Flach* gives an example from the Waltharius hymn, according to which the members of the brotherhood mixed their blood.[9]

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[4] *Williams,* Social Scandinavia, pp. 24 f.

[5] ERE 3, Celts; *Giraldus Cambrensis,* Topographia, p. 19.

[6] The Old English versions, p. 19.

[7] op. cit. anno 1236.

[8] *Nares'* Glossary, sub voce "arms"; *NQ* 6/1888, p. 474.

Siméon Luce, speaking about medical conditions in early medieval France, says that it was owing to the influence of a famous Arab doctor who died about 923 that frequent bleeding became the fashion. People had themselves bled, he says, not only when they felt indisposed, but also when they wished to mix blood with a friend, a brother-in-arms, or a lady, as a token of eternal friendship. He gives an instance of such a brotherhood-in-arms, mentioning that Bertrand de Guesclin and Olivier de Clisson bled together and mixed their blood when they became brothers-in-arms. He also quotes a manuscript relating to certain burgesses which describes how they bled together as a sign of their friendship and the affection they accorded one another.[1]

Joinville ascribes the blood-pact to the Comans, a tribe of Huns established in Moldavia. It is related that the French emperor of Constantinople and the other wealthy men of the city had allied themselves with a people called the Comans, so that they might have the help of the latter against Valaces, the then king of the Greeks. In order to ensure that each party should aid the other faithfully, the emperor and the other rich men with him had to be bled into a great cup of silver: "And the king of the Comans and the other rich men that were with him did likewise, and mixed their blood with the blood of our folk, and tempered it with wine and water, and drank thereof, and our men likewise; and then they said that they were blood-brothers. Further they made a dog cross from our folk to theirs and cut up the dog with their swords, and so did our men likewise: and said that thus should they be cut up if they failed one another."[2] *Ducange* defends the French, saying that they were surrounded in Constantinople and attacked from without on all sides and were forced to act in this way, accommodating themselves to the custom of the times, in order to fend off the insults of their enemies.

There were similar circumstances associated with a ceremony which another French nobleman, the Count of Tripoli, had to submit to. Albéric says that in the year 1187 this custom was practised among the Saracens, and tells of the alliance which the Count contracted with the Moslem sultan. The ceremony involved their drinking of each other's blood.[3]

Baldwin, Count of Flanders, reproached the Greeks with so far accommodating themselves to the manners of the barbarians with whom they made alliances as to drink their blood.[4] In this connection it is interesting to read what such a scholar as *Gustave Glotz* has to say about similar customs among the Greeks. He refers to the question in connection with the sacrifice, which he considers to have been a form of communion before it became a solemnisation of an oath and symbol of an imprecation. In making a sacrifice to their ancestors they offered blood, the principle of life. When two men belonging to different groups took part in such a rite, this should be interpreted, according to *Glotz,* as a formal admission of one of the men into the other's group. This fraternisation through blood, this communion, was undoubtedly practised by the Greeks in its oldest form, that is to say, the participants mixed their blood in order to create a kind of consanguinity. Wherever the Greeks came into contact with neighbouring people not so advanced in civilisation as themselves, they experienced no difficulty in returning to this custom of their forefathers. *Glotz* takes a passage from Herodotus as example, where Greek mercenaries are described as having drunk human blood mixed with water and wine as a token of their alliance; Xenophon describes a similar ceremony where the soldiers dipped their swords in a shield filled with blood.[5]

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[9] *Flach,* Les origines, pp. 471 ff.; *Mills,* History of Chiv., chap. IV.; *Lacurne de Sainte Palaye,* Mémoires I, p. 227.

[1] *Luce,* Histoire de Bertrand de Guesclin, p. 70 f.

[2] *Joinville,* Histoire de S. Louys, p. 94.

[3] *Ib.* Diss. XXI.

[4] *Ib.* loc. cit.

The drinking of blood on the occasion of an alliance, compact, or oath was common among the ancient Magyars. The anonymous notary of King Béla says: "More paginismo fusis propriis sanguinibus in unum vas ratum fecerunt iuramentum."[6] And in the primitive Hungarian story of the *Hetu moger* there is a description of the way in which Almus was chosen chief, how each man on swearing allegiance to him stretched his right arm over a basin, and having opened a vein, allowed some of the blood to run into it, swearing then to be true to him and his family, to treat each other as equals and to share the booty fairly. While the blood was running into the bowl a wish was uttered: that if either side forgot the pact the blood might not cease to flow until the vein was empty.[7]

Nagy Géza says that this custom was still alive in Hungary during the sixteenth century.[8] We read in *Peçevi's* History that Arslan Pascha, the Turkish governor in Budapest, became blood-brother to a Hungarian Christian; they pricked their fingers and licked one another's blood.[9] *Kálmány* points out that *áldomás* is drunk when a sale of stock is concluded, but wine is now used instead of blood. The same author quotes from an old Hungarian tale which relates how a prince and an ogre made an alliance by half-filling a glass with blood from their little fingers, whereupon they filled it up with wine and drank together.[1]

Blood also plays a part in the Hungarian love magic. *Sztancsek* relates an instance where the wife pricked the little finger of her right hand and let the blood drop unnoticed into her husband's wine.[2] It is interesting to note that there are similar things among Finnish traditions: it was possible for a woman to win the love of a man she loved by giving him a little of her blood with bread or meat. The bonds of married love could be strengthened by blood taken from a finger of the left hand or a corresponding toe and given to the partner.[3]

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[5] *Glotz,* La solidarité, pp. 159 f. Cf. *Kircher,* Die sakrale, pp. 79 f.

[6] *Dörfler,* Das Blut im magyarischen Volkglauben, p. 270.

[7] *Szabó Károly,* A magyarok, pp. 12 f.; Cf *Thierry,* Histoire, II pp. 384 f.; *Schwandtner,* Scriptores rerum, I, 6.

[8] *Nagy Géza,* Egy pár szó, p. 313.

[9] *Peçevi* Tarihi, Cilt, I, 256: Cf *Tagányi,* ETN 29/1918 pp. 46 ff.

[1] *Kálmány,* Vérint való testvérek, pp. 101, 41.

[2] *Sctancsek,* Privigye vidékén, p. 295: 175.

[3] *Hämäläinen,* Ihmisruumiin substanssi, pp. 61 ff.; Cf. *F* 18/1907, p. 448, where *Conybeare* says that it was the custom in parts of Brittany for a girl just wedded to make an incision under the left breast immediately the ceremony in church was over. The bridegroom then sucked a drop of her blood.

Blood ceremonies have also been reported among the Hungarian gypsies; this is treated in a later section at the end of this chapter.

We find a special method of entering into the blood relationship in the Italian provinces of the Abruzzi in the Central Apennines. Saint Giovanni is the patron saint of the *comparatico,* or those who enter into the relationship as *compare* or *compari.* This bond is cemented by the exchange of two drops of blood. Two children dance around, each of them holding the little finger of the right hand of the other, reciting a rhyme to the effect that if they ever harm one another they are damned.

Each one then pricks himself and mingles his blood with that of his companion. They thus become united in life and death, and it is a sacrilege to break the tie.[4]

Hartland states that the band of Mala Vita in Southern Italy, broken up in the eighteen-nineties, was a blood-brotherhood.[5] The ritual is described by *Strack;* the neophyte and the leader of the band entered into a blood-pact by sucking and drinking each other's blood taken from wounds which they made in their chests.[6]

A blood-mixing rite in Germany is reported by *Rochholz.* The members of a brotherhood in Helmstädt and Leipzig cut their arms, let the blood drop into a goblet and drank it on bended knee.[7]

We now turn to a centre of the insitution —to the countries of the Southern Slavs— where blood-friendship was a living force admitted within the walls of the sanctuary by the recognition of the Christian Church. Here we meet with many forms, but we shall commence with an instance in which the drinking of blood played a part. According to a Bosnian authority quoted by *Krauss,* the priest offered up a prayer in which he dwelled upon the mutual duties of the two men who wished to become blood-brothers. He made them kiss one another and repeat after him the words of a solemn oath. Then the younger brother scratched his arm so as to draw a few drops of blood, which he mixed with wine. The brothers drank the mixture and the compact was sealed.[8]

Krauss doubts the accuracy of this account, but *Ciszewski* accept it as reliable and adduces corroborative evidence from other quarters. He gives examples taken from *Hahn* about the custom in Albania and from *Hörmann* with regard to Bosnia. According to *Hahn,* the blood-rite figured in the marriage ceremony, the union being solemnised in the church, where the priest said a traditional prayer over the man and woman. In some places the pair then made scratches in their skin and drank a few drops of one another's blood. The ceremony ended with a wedding feast. According to *Hörmann* the Mahometan Bosnians bound themselves in brotherhood by making a scratch on their arms until a few drops of blood appeared, whereupon they licked one another's blood. Other examples of similar practices are given from different parts of the region. The custom was quite common in Serbia and Macedonia as late as the end of the nineteenth century. Two friends would plight themselves to brotherhood by eating salt and bread together, and drinking wine into which each had let drop a little blood from his right arm. It was the duty of each blood-brother to endeavour to protect his *pobratim,* to prevent to any insult to him and to revenge his death, if need be.[9]

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[4] *Canziani,* Abruzzese Folklore, p. 225.

[5] *Hartland,* The Legend of Perseus, II, p. 238.

[6] *Strack,* Das Blut im Glauben, p. 24.

[7] *Rochholz,* Deutscher Glaube, I, p. 52.

[8] *Krauss,* Sitte und Brauch, pp. 625 ff.

In Serbia and Croatia people showed their friendship for one another by the exchange of willow crowns and gifts and kisses on St. John the Baptist's day. In Southern Bulgaria, on the same day, two friends might exchange bunches of twigs in the presence of their invited guests, and, having pricked themselves, sucked each other's blood in order to show the intimacy of their union. Thenceforward they treated one another as if they were blood-relations. After this exchange of blood they approached the hearth and placed their feet upon it, while the guests were commencing the feast. Then the brothers embraced one another, kissed hands, and, exchanging the bunches of twigs, drank out of the same bowl. They gave one another presents, and visited other friends and relatives. Upon the corresponding day of the next year the compact was renewed, the elder brother, who on the previous occasion was the younger brother's guest, being host on this occasion.[1] In Bulgaria, bride and bridegroom mixed wine on the occasion of their marriage in order to make peace between their kinsmen. *Barber* is of the opinion that the wine is a substitute for blood.[2] The bond could embrace either two men, or two women, or a man and a woman. Medieval chronicles record instances of this and it also appears in folk literature. The emperor Basilius, who died in 886, a Bulgarian, is supposed to have had such a brother. The solemnisation of the tie involved each party's pricking his arm or wrist, allowing the blood to mingle in a glass, and drinking the mixture.[3]

From the border of Dalmatia and Montenegro comes an instance of a blood-feud. A girl was murdered and this called for revenge. A ceremony occurred which is rather interesting because it was connected with the Church's Holy Communion. The men pledging themselves to vengeance bowed down before the priest with the bread and communion-cup in his hands. They made cuts in their left forefingers and let the blood run into the communion-cup, whereupon the priest mixed the bread, wine and blood with his finger. He bade the avengers raise one hand to heaven and touch with the other the clothes of the murdered girl, and commanded them to repeat after him a long oath, pledging the bloodiest possible revenge on the family of the murderer. He then told them to kneel down and gave them the bread and wine mixed with blood as in the communion service. In conclusion, he elevated the cup and uttered a prayer for help to the avengers, whom he then blessed.[4]

Krauss states that blood-feuds were common among the Southern Slavs, and might be terminated by the parties becoming blood-brothers, which he finds rather remarkable. This was effected by a representative of one clan sucking blood from the vein of the right wrist of a representative of the other clan, whereby all the members of the clan became blood-brothers to all the members of the other. Mahometan women did not veil themselves in the presence of such blood-brothers, even if Christians, any more than they would before their other bloodrelations.[5] *Jevons* is of the opinion that this is important, because it faithfully preserves the primitive view that the blood-brotherhood thus established is not a relationship personal to the two parties alone, but one extending to the whole of each clan: my brother is, or becomes, the brother of all my brethren; the blood which flows in the veins of either party to the blood-covenant flows in the veins of all his kin.[6]

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[9] *Ciszewski,* Künstliche Verwandtschaft, pp. 60 ff; Cf. *Gopcevic,* Ober-albanien und seine Liga, p. 302.

[1] *Ciszewski,* op. cit. pp. 44 f.

[2] *Barber,* Gewohnheitsrechtliches aus Bulgarien, p. 93.

[3] *Krauss,* loc. cit.; Cf. *Lowie,* Social Organization, p. 58.

[4] *Ciszewski,* op. cit. pp. 62 f.

[5] *Krauss,* Sühnung der Blutrache, pp. 194 ff.

In Russia, brotherhood were formed by swearing eternal friendship and drinking together or exchanging gifts.[7] The few available sources do not indicate whether there was any exchange of blood. But there is one instance from the Kedars and Khazars, ancient tribes dwelling in the country between the Caucasus, the Volga, and the Don; they were defeated by Attila and dispersed over a wide area. Rabbi Petachia of Ratisbon travelled in these parts at the end of the twelfth century and he relates the manner in which they pledged their faith to one another before making a journey. One thrust a needle into his finger, and invited the intended companion to drink the blood, whereby they became of the same blood and flesh, as it were.[8]

We have already mentioned that the Turks practised the blood-pact in their alliances with the Hungarian Christians. According to *Makusev,* Turks and Christians in Montenegro mixed blood by cutting the tip of a finger and laying it in the other's mouth. There is another account of exchange of blood among the Turks in eastern Bulgaria. They licked one another's blood from cuts in their fingers. The bond was regarded as more intimate than that between real brothers, in that it was supposed to extend into the life to come. Nevertheless, it was no obstacle to marriage with the blood-brother's sister, although his permission was required for such a marriage.[9]

Georgiev says that at one time Bulgarians could not reside in Constantinople among the Turks unless they entered into blood-brotherhood with them.[1]

Professor *Abdülkadir Inan* has informed me that the blood-alliance, "ant", is alluded to in Turkish folk literature.[2]

We have already pointed out that as early as the time of *Herodotus,* our oldest authority, the Arabs were accustomed to establish a blood-brotherhood by smearing sacred stones with their own blood, while they invoked the god and the goddess. Examples of a similar use of the blood, in the solemn ratification of a treaty or in the swearing of an oath, also occur at a much later period. The blood was licked, or the hand dipped in it. Sometimes water or a perfumed liquid was employed as a substitute.[3]

A detailed description of the Arabian covenant is given by *Robertson Smith,* of which a summary is given below.

Duties of blood-feud and rights of inheritance are regarded in Arabia as properly flowing from unity of blood. In support of this, *Smith* says that there is evidence that a covenant till death was originally accompanied by a sacramental ceremony which signified that the participants had commingled their blood. However, all evidence from Arabic writers is of comparatively late date, so it is only by a combination of fragments of evidence that reliable conclusion can be reached. A covenant of alliance and protection was based upon an oath, called *casama,* a word which almost certainly implies, *Smith* states, that the god was made a party of the act. At Mecca protection was publicly constituted or renounced at the Ka'ba and such a life and death covenant was formed between the group of clans subsequently known as "blood-lickers". The form of the oath was that each party dipped their hands in a pan of blood and tasted the contents. But the use of blood in sealing a compact was not confined to Mecca. *Smith* refers to other accounts which indicate that blood-pacts were also made when peace was declared between groups. The custom was so well established, he argues, that there is a technical word, *asham,* for blood so used. In order to understand the meaning of the blood he compares certain other forms of covenant saying: "that the covenant known as the *hilf al-fodul* was made by taking Zemzem water and washing the corners of the Ka'ba with it, after which it was drunk by the parties. Again, the allies called the Motayyabun, 'perfumed,' sware to one another by dipping their hands in a pan of perfume or unguent, and then wiping them on the Ka'ba, whereby the god himself became a party to the compact. All these covenants are Meccan and were made about the same period, so that it is hardly credible that there was any fundamental difference in the praxis. We must rather hold that they are all types of one and the same rite, imperfectly related and probably softened by the narrator. The form in which blood is used is plainly the more primitive or the more exactly related, but the account of it must be filled up from the others by the addition of the feature that the blood was also applied to the sacred stones or fetishes at the corners of the Ka'ba. And now we can connect the rite with that described in Herodotus 3.8, where the contracting parties draw each other's blood and smear it on seven stones set up in the midst. Comparing this with the later rite we see that they are really one, and that Herodotus has got the thing in its earliest form, but has omitted one trait necessary to the understanding of the symbolism, and preserved in the Meccan tradition. The later Arabs had substituted the blood of a victim for human blood, but they retained a feature which Herodotus had missed, they licked the blood as well as smeared it on the sacred stones. Originally therefore the ceremony was that known in so many parts of the world, in which the contracting parties become one by actually drinking or tasting one another's blood. The seven stones in Herodotus are of course sacred stones, the Arabic *ansab,* Hebrew masseboth . . . We see then that two groups might make themselves of one blood by a process of which the essence was that they commingled their blood, at the same time applying the blood to the god or fetish so as to make him a party to the covenant also. Quite similar is the ritual in Exod. 24, where blood is applied to the people of Israel and to the altar. In certain cases in Arabia a man still seeks protection by drawing his own blood and wiping his gory hands on the doorpost of the man whose favour he intreats, but here the act is at the same time one of deprecation and atonement. For the significance which the Arabs down to the time of Mohammed attached to the tasting of another man's living blood there is an instructive evidence in Ibn Hisham, p. 572. Of Malik, who sucked the prophet's wound at Ohod and swallowed the blood, Mohammed said, 'He whose blood has touched mine cannot be reached by hell-fire.'

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[6] *Jevons,* Introduction to the History, p. 99.

[7] *Ciszewski,* Künstliche Verwandtschaft, pp. 58 ff.; Cf. *Volkov,* Mélusine, V, pp. 194 ff.

[8] *Benisch,* Travels of Rabbi Petachia, p. 5.

[9] *Ciszewski,* op. cit. pp. 27, 67.

[1] *Ib.* p. 26.; Cf. *Vambery,* Das Türkenvolk, pp. 252 f.

[2] *Abdülkadir Inan,* Eski türkler' de ve Folklorda "Ant".

[3] *Landberg,* La langue arabe, p. 74. f. *Wellhausen,* Reste, p. 125.; *Nöldeke,* Arabs, ERE, I, p. 665.

The commingling of blood by which two men became brothers or two kins allies, and the fiction of adoption by which a new tribesman was feigned to be the veritable son of a member of the tribe, are both evidences of the highest value that the Arabs were incapable of conceiving any absolute social unity which was not based on kinship; for a legal fiction is always adopted to reconcile an act with a principle too firmly established to be simply ignored. But of the two forms of the fiction that of blood brotherhood would seem to be the older, having much earlier attestation and a manifestly primitive character. And in this there seems to lie an indication that in the oldest times the social bond was not necessarily dependent on fatherhood. In the case of adoption a man becomes tribesman by becoming a tribesman's son, in the other case the allies directly enter into the fellowship of the blood of the tribe as a whole."[4]

A very interesting instance from the Arabs in Tripoli in 1790 is reported by *Tully.* It is said that the Bey and another Arab dignitary "took the sacred oaths of allegiance to each other at the shrines of their saints; they went together a short time since to renew and confirm their oaths in a still stronger manner, by performing the last ceremony resorted to in this country of what they term the mixing of blood. To accomplish this barbarous idea, they approached together the altar of Mahomet, and after swearing by the Koran each to hold the other's life sacred, they wounded themselves with their knives, and mixing their blood in a vessel, shocking to relate, they both sipped of it."[5]

Doughty gives a reference to a late occurence of the blood-pact among the Kahtân, a tribe of Southern Arabia. It is said that they "confirmed their solemn swearing together by drinking human gore."[6]

Speaking of the blood-pact among the Arabs, *Murray* points out that the pacts do not seem to occur nowadays, but of their former existence there can be no doubt.[7]

In Syria the rite is connected with a compact *litteris.* A native Syrian who saw the rite being performed in a village described it to *Trumbull.* It was two young men who were to enter into a blood-pact. They had known each other intimately for years; but now they were to become brothers by a covenant of blood. Their relatives and neighbours were called together in the open place before the village fountain, to witness the sealing of the compact. The young men publicly announced their purpose, and their reasons for it. Their declarations were written down, in duplicate,—one paper for each friend,—and signed by themselves and by several witnesses. One of the friends took a sharp lancet, and opened a vein in the other's arm. Into the opening thus made he inserted a quill, through which he sucked the living blood. The lancet was carefully wiped on one of the duplicate covenant-papers, and then it was taken by the other friend, who made a similar incision in its first user's arm and drank his blood through the quill, wiping the blade on the duplicate covenanting-record. The two friends declared together: "We are brothers in a covenant made before God: who deceiveth the other, him will God deceive." Each blood-marked record of the covenant was then folded carefully, to be sewed up in a small leathern case, or amulet, about an inch square; to be worn thenceforward by one of the brothers, suspended about his neck, or bound upon his arm as a token of the indissoluble relationship. *Trumbull* states that there were many forms of covenanting in Syria, but this was the most sacred of them all, and he goes on to say that in view of its responsibilities and its indissoluble quality, this covenant is sometimes entered into by confidential partners in business, or by fellow-travellers; it is also the chosen compact of loving friends. This covenant is usually between two persons of the same religion; yet it has been known to occur between two persons of different religions.[8]

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[4] *Robertson Smith,* Kinship and marriage, pp. 56 ff.; Cf. *Id.,* The Religion of the Semites, pp. 313 ff.

[5] *Tully,* Narrative of ten years' residence, p. 236.

[6] *Doughty,* Travels in Arabia, II, p. 41.

[7] *Murray,* Sons of, p. 196.

Trumbull received personal testimony from native Syrians concerning the observance of this rite in Damascus, in Aleppo, in Hasbayya, in Abayh, along the road between Tyre and Sidon, and among the Koords resident in Salehayyah. He further points out that Syrian Arabs in making the bond of blood-friendship drew the blood from the upper arm because, as they explained it, the arm was their strength.[9]

We will now consider instances of the rite from entirely different parts of the world. *Minns* says that the Hiung-nu, nomads of Eastern Asia, supposed to trace their descent from the founder of the Hia dynasty B. C. 2205—1768, established peace and friendship by means of blood-pacts. It is said that one of their chiefs established his position by a treaty with China in 49 B. C. A blood-pact was sealed on this occasion. The chief took a knife, som gold, and a rice spoon, with them mixed wine and blood together, and drank of it with the Chinese envoys.[1]

The last remnants of Hiung-nu power are said to have been driven west to reappear as the Huns we know in Eastern Europe.[2]

Minns states that parallels for a lot of ceremonies, including the oath ceremony, may be found in almost any race from Kamchatka to the Cape of Good Hope, and he argues that such parallels prove nothing but that the human mind works on similar lines in different countries. Thus the ceremonies of blood-brotherhood may also be parallelled, he suggests, among the Parthians, also apparently an Uralo-Altaic tribe, the Magyars and the Comans.[3]

In connection with the Hungarian blood-pact, *Munkácsi* mentions a parallel: a pact between a Siberian governor and the subject Tartars living around the lower reaches of the Irtysh. This pact is said to have been made in 1582.[4]

The mixing of blood with drink in the solemn pacts was common among the Mongols. *D'Ohsson* states that they mingled gold and blood in their cup of peace.[5] Gengis-Kahn and other Mongolians chiefs were blood-brothers, *anda*.[6]

Rev. *A. Moestaert,* who was for 19 years a missionary among the Ordo Mongols, has described the manner in which a blood mixing ritual is carried out among them: it involves drinking a mixture of blood and brandy, followed by a ceremonial washing, obeisance to heaven, signing of a document, and finally a feast with relatives and friends. The *anda* are called brothers and are bound to help one another without payment; they have free access to each other's houses, and if one dies, the other assists at his funeral. Women may be blood-sisters, but they do not seem to drink brandy mixed with blood.

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[8] *Trumbull,* The Blood Covenant, pp. 5 ff.

[9] *Ib.,* pp. 8, 234 f.

[1] *Minns,* Scythians and Greeks, pp. 5 f.

[2] *Grousset,* L'Empires des steppes, p. 77.

[3] *Minns,* op. cit. p. 87.

[4] *Munkácsi,* A honfoglaló vezérek, p. 254.

[5] *D'Ohsson,* Histoire des Mongols, t. 3, pp. 429, 431.; *Howorth,* History, p. 587.

[6] *Vladimircof,* The Life of Chengis-Kahn, pp. 26, 30, 60.; *Grousset,* L'empire des steppes, p. 405.

As this was communicated to me in a letter from the Rev. *Moestaert* himself, and as the information has not previously been published, I find it appropriate to quote the original in full:

"Je ne saurais vous dire où *d'Ohsson* a trouvé ce renseignement d'après lequel du sang dans lequel avait été jeté de l'or aurait été bu par des princes devenant *anda.* Mais je puis vous assurer que la coutume de devenir frères par serment *(anda)* en buvant du sang continue d'exister chez les Mongols Ordos. Le rite par lequel les Mongols Ordos deviennent *anda* est le suivant.

Les futurs *anda* choisissent un jour heureux et invitent quelques parents et amis. De l'eau-de-vie est versée dans un godet et les futurs *anda* s'étant piqués au doigt laissent tomber quelques gouttes de sang dans cette eau-de-vie; après quoi chacun d'eux boit une gorgée de cette mixtion. Ce qui reste est répandu à terre. Ensuite on jette cinquante ou cent sapèques de cuivre dans un bassin d'eau. Les nouveaux *anda* se lavent alors chacun à son tour la figure avec cette eau et les sapèques sont données en cadeau au plus jeune d'entre eux. Après cela on allume des bâtonnets adoriférants (en mongol littéraire:*küji)* et les nouveaux *anda* donnent la prostration (en mongol littéraire:*mögükü)* au Ciel. Enfin on dresse un acte dans lequel on inscrit les noms des nouveaux frères et la cérémonie prend fin par un repas auquel les *anda* et leurs parents et amis invités prennent part.

Les *anda* se nomment frères et doivent s'entr'aider sans qu'ils aient le droit d'exiger une rémunération pour services rendus. Ils ont libre entrée l'un chez l'autre. Quand l'un d'eux meurt, tous portent le deuil.

Les femmes aussi peuvent devenir *anda* entre elles. Mais cela arrive beaucoup plus rarement. Elles deviennent alors *anda ageci degü* ("sœur par serment"). Je n'oserait pas affirmer que le rite par lequel les femmes deviennent *anda* soit le même que pour les hommes. Je sais qu'elles aussi se lavent la figure avec de l'eau dans laquelle on a mis des sapèques, mais j'ignore si elles boivent de l'eau-de vie mêlée avec du sang."[7]

According to a Chinese text from Chiu-Wu-tai-shih, Chapter 15, from the tenth century, blood from an incision in the arm figures in the solemnisation of treaties.[8]

Eberhard states that the blood-brotherhood in the time of the Tai Culture was incorporated in the societies of youths, in order to "bind together" the initiates. It was the custom among the southern tribes to kill an animal, a dog, for instance, and to mix its blood with wine, which was then drunk. The custom also occurred under later dynasties. The Yüch are said to have had a special variation of it, where the blood had to be taken from the arms of the partners in the rite. This latter custom also appeared in the State of Lu.[9]

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[7] Letter 24/4 1951; For the word "anda" vid. *Mostaert,* Dictionnaire Ordos, I, p. 23 a.

[8] *Eberhard* (Letter 5/1 1951: "Zu den ... mitgeteilten Texten habe ich jetzt noch einen: aus dem Chiu-Wu-tai-shih, chapter 15, p. 4218 a (of the K'ai-ming Edition). Er stammt aus dem 10. Jahrhundert, Nordchina, und besagt, dass die Personen einen Vertrag abschlossen, wobei sie sich in den Arm schnitten."

Granet mentions a duel between archers which finished in a blood-pact. The blood was taken from the arm. He says the custom was characteristic of the Yue people. He also mentions how a prince of Lu promised a girl that she would be his principal wife. She made a incision in her arm and the blood symbolised the pact between herself and the prince.[1]

In some secret societies in China, which are said to extend to Malaya and the East Indian islands, a blood rite is part of the initiation ceremony. The novice must swear an oath of fidelity, whereupon he makes a cut in his finger and lets three drops of blood fall into a bowl containing arrack. Three of the elders of the society do likewise. The blood and arrack are mixed and each drinks from the mixture.[2]

When the members of the d'Ollone Mission were among the Lolos in 1906–9 they had to swear the oath of blood. Each participant in this oath pricked his arm, allowing a few drops of blood to fall into a cup of wine, after which all in turn touched their lips to the contents while repeating the words of the oath.[3]

It is said that the Siamese practised a covenant of friendship where the parties drank each other's blood from wounds which they made in their bodies.[4]

Blood-covenanting was still practised at the end of the last century along the south-western border of the Chinese Empire, in Burma. Among the Karens there were three methods of making a brotherhood, or truce: eating together, planting a tree, and mingling blood. They are given in the order of their binding power; the first implied cessation of hostilities for a limited time, the second for the duration of the tree's life, while the third was much more far-reaching in its effects. The chief represented the tribe, or the father the family, in the solemnisation of a blood-covenant. Blood was drawn from the thigh of the two representatives and mixed together, whereupon each dipped his finger in the blood and touched it to his lips. This was the more common method, although the blood was said to be drunk in some cases. The covenant was a very strong bond, not only as a truce, but also as a promise of mutual assistance in peace and war. It embraced the entire tribes if the parties were chiefs, and if one was an ordinary person, the whole of his family and the immediate descendants.

A few missionaries entered into the blood-covenant with Karen tribes, and in one instance at least, the Karens regarded the blood bond as applying not only to the missionary and his children, but also to his son-in-law. It was almost impossible to travel in the wilder Karen regions, where the chiefs closed all paths on hearing that a stranger had entered their territory, unless some member of the party was in a blood-covenant with the tribe.

Trumbull quotes an account from another missionary to the Karens, who said that the custom was for chiefs to mingle blood from their arms in whisky and to drink of the mixture, promising to be true to one another, down to the seventh generation. After the chiefs, their followers drank of the mixture and were thereby included in the blood bond. This missionary also mentioned a blood-covenant among a party of Shans who intended to murder him for plunder. They drank the blood of the leader mingled with whisky, or a kind of beer made from rice.[5]

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[9] *Ib.* Die Lokalkulturen, Mon. ser. 3/1942, p. 335.

[1] *Granet,* Dances, I, pp. 205, 356, n. 3.

[2] *Anon.* Die geheim. Gesellsch. pp. 809 ff,; *Lepper,* Les sociétés secrètes, p. 286.

[3] *D'Ollone,* In forbidden China, pp. 45 f.

[4] *Michelet,* Origines du droit, p. 199.

Blood-mingling has been observed amongst certain tribes in India, the rite being associated with the marriage ritual. During the Kewat ceremony of marriage a drop of blood was drawn from the fingers of the bride and bridegroom and mixed with rice, which was then eaten by the pair.[6]

A Rajput bride and groom likewise chewed betel with which was mixed a tiny drop of blood drawn from the other's little finger. This usage was called the joining of love.[7] Smearing bride and bridegroom with each other's blood was practised by the Birhors, a hill tribe of the Munda stock.[8] Among other tribes the bride and bridegroom, especially at widow marriages, were marked with vermilion; this was possibly a substitute for blood.[9]

Among the Sifan Tibetans the betrothal was sealed by each cutting a small incision in the arm and mingling the blood flowing from the wounds.[1]

A typical example of a blood pledge between man and woman occurred in Annam. When a young man and a girl wished to bind themselves indissolubly, they often cut themselves on the tip of the finger and drank one another's blood.[2] In some instances not only were the bride and bridegroom thus united by a blood bond, but all their relatives also. Thus in Cambodia the priest when performing a wedding ceremony marks the forehead of all the relatives with the sign of blood.[3]

There are a great number of instances of the mixing of blood from the West Pacific islands, and we will here only refer to the most interesting of them.

Magellan and his followers entered into blood-pacts with the natives during their circumnavigation. When they came to the island of Cebu, they went on shore and explained that the expedition brought people of peace who sought provisions. The king of the island agreed to a treaty, and proposed that it should be ratified according to the native custom — drawing blood from the breast of each party, the one drinking that of the other.[1]

A somewhat different blood rite is reported by *Pigafetta,* who says that when the ship came to a large rocky island, near Mindanao, they were received by the chief, who, to show that he wished to be on a friendly footing with the newcomers, made a cut in his left hand. He smeared this blood on his body, his face, and on the tip of his tongue. The Europeans did the same. It is said that the same custom was met with on the island of Palawan.[2]

However, more typical examples of blood mixing ceremonies occur in several other places in this part of the world.

When *Saiavedra* came to the island of

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[5] *Trumbull,* The Blood Covenant, pp. 313 ff.

[6] *Russel,* The Tribes, III, p. 425.

[7] *Sumner-Keller,* The Science of Society, III, p. 1722.

[8] *Roy,* The Birhors, pp. 186 f.; Cf. *Id.,* The Mundas, p. 448.

[9] *Roy,* The Karias, pp. 263, 238, 273.; Cf. *Dalton,* Descr. Ethn. pp. 160, 216, 252, 273, 321.

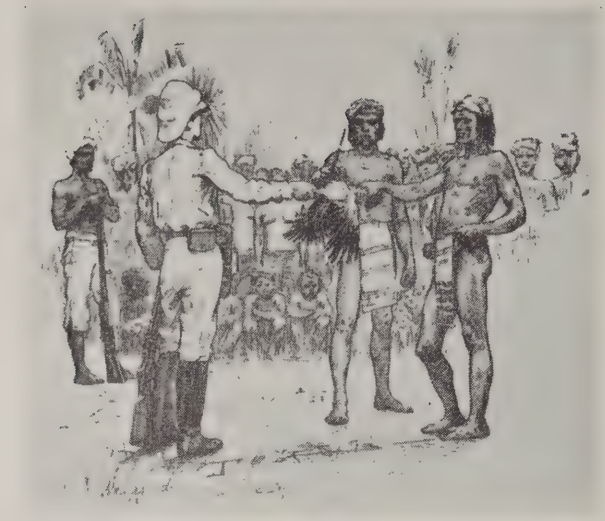
[1] *Sumner-Keller,* op. cit. IV. p. 909.

[2] *Des Michels,* Kim van Kiêu, I, p. 92, n. 2.

[3] *De Rémusat,* Nouveaux Mélanges Asiatiques, I, p. 116.

[1] *Herrera,* Historia general, Década III, pp. 6 f.

[2] *Pigafetta,* Premier voyage, pp. 131, 137.



Hatton is made "Blood-brother" of a Dusun chief. (After F. Hatton.)

Candiga, one of the Moluccas, he is said to have made a treaty with the chief there, which they solemnised by drinking each other's blood. The followers of *Magellan* entered a similar sort of friendship with the chief of the island of Callennado, when they continued their voyage after the death of *Magellan*.[3] Similar usages are reported by other travellers from several islands.[4] When two men of the Dusuns of Borneo wished to become blood-brothers, each made a cut in his wrist and the other drank a little of the blood from the cut. After that, presents were exchanged, either fowls, tobacco or rice. Sometimes a fowl was sacrificed for the ceremony, and each man said: "If I cheat you, may I become as this fowl which has just been killed."[5]

It is not at all improbable that the pledging of friendship by which *Hatton* became "blood-brother" to a Dusun chief is a survival of an older ceremony of pledging in blood. No human blood was involved in the ceremony, which had some of the characteristics of an ordeal rather than the solemnisation of a pact. The chief and *Hatton* met in the presence of their followers, and the chief delivered an opening discourse and, calling on his god to be present, he took the head of a fowl and *Hatton* the feet. An attendant cut off the fowl's head, and the dying fowl was dropped on the ground. It hopped away to the jungle, so the friendly intentions of both parties were ensured; if it had hopped towards either party, it would have signified that "his heart was not true." The pact of friendship was further strengthened by an exchange of weapons. *Hatton* mentions other brotherhood ceremonies which perhaps cannot be traced back to the artificial creation of a blood-bond. They are, however, practised with the same end in view, namely, the extension of peace and friendship. They are socializing. Guest-friendship, hospitality, and, in general, the handling of the stranger as other than an enemy, are productive of the extension of the peace-bond.[6]

Roth quotes a full and variously significant description of the ceremony from Borneo as presented by a man who went through it, "Selgie requested I would make *sobat* with him; on my gladly consenting, he went in person and stuck a spear into the ground above his father's grave. This being the signal for a general assembly, each of the chiefs sent a person to know the Rajah's pleasure; it was that every warrior should assemble around the grave by twelve o'clock the next day. Some thousands were present;

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[3] *Gomara,* Histoire, p. 110; Cf. *RTP* 1893, p. 532.

[4] *Riedel,* De sluik- en kroesharige, p. 447; *Kruyt,* Het animisme, pp. 57 f.; *Argensola,* Histoire de la conquête, I, lib. II, pp. 102 ff.; *Bastian,* Indonesien IV, p. 65.

[5] *Evans,* Among Primitive Peoples of Borneo, pp. 168 f.

[6] *Hatton,* North Borneo, pp. 195 f., 201 f., 203.

a platform of bamboo was raised about twelve feet above the grave, and on this Selgie and I mounted, accompanied by an Agi, his high priest. After some previous ceremony, the Agi produced a small silver cup, which might hold about two wine glasses, and then with a piece of bamboo made very sharp, drew blood from the Rajah's right arm: the blood ran into the cup until it was nearly full; he then produced another cup, of a similar size, and made an incision in my arm, a little above the elbow, and filled it with blood. The two cups were then held up to the view of the surrounding people, who greeted them with loud cheers. The Agi now presented me with the cup of Selgie's blood, giving him the other one with mine; upon a signal, we drank off the contents amidst the deafening noise of the warriors and others. The Agi then half-filled one of the cups again from Selgie's arm, and with my blood made it a bumper; this was stirred up with a piece of bamboo and given to Selgie, who drank about half; he then presented the cup to me, when I finished it. The noise was tremendous; thus the great Rajah Selgie and I became brothers. After this ceremony I was perfectly safe, and from that moment felt myself so during my stay amongst his people. Drinking the blood, however, made me ill for two day as I could not throw it off my stomach. The Rajah took his share with great gusto, as this is considered one of the greatest ceremonies, particularly on this occasion, between the great Rajah and the first European who had been seen in this country. Great festivities followed and abundance of heads were brought in, for nothing can be done without them. Three days and nights all ranks of people danced round these heads, after being, as usual, smoked and the brains taken out, drinking a kind of toddy which soon intoxicates them; they are then taken care of by the women who do not drink, at least I never observed them."[7]

The same author relates the experience of another traveller as follows, "The following was observed on my initiation into the brotherhood with Lasa Kulan, the chief of Balaga on the Rajang, and of Tubow on the Bintulu river. Two days previous to that on which the bloody affair came off, the great hall of the chief was garnished with the weapons and gaudy skin war dresses of the men, and dashed with a fair sprinkling of the finery of the women kept more for show than use. On the day appointed, a number of the neighbouring chiefs having arrived, several of them commenced proceedings by haranguing on the greatness and power of their own selves, and of all the wonders they had heard of the white people, and of their satisfaction in being visited by one of them, of whom their fathers had heard so much but had never seen . . . The chief then announced his intention of becoming the friend or brother of a son of the white man, on which one of the attending chiefs gave me a small sharp-pointed piece of bamboo, with which I made a slight incision in the right fore-arm of the chief, and the blood drawn out was put on a leaf. The chief then, with a similar instrument, drew blood from my left fore-arm, which was put on the same leaf and mingled with the other. The blood was then mixed with tobacco and made up into a large cigar which we puffed alternately until it was finished, when my new friend delivered himself of a long and eloquent speech, invoking their god Tanangan, the sun, moon, and stars, and rivers, the woods and mountains to witness his sincerity."[8]

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[7] *Roth,* Natives of Sarawak, II, pp. 205 f.

A similar case of the brotherhood-ceremony in Borneo is described by *Douglas.* Two chiefs went through the ritual which consisted in each man making a small cut on the upper arm of the other and taking a drop of blood which was put into a cigarette and smoked in turn by each, after which a fowl was killed as a sacrifice, and the gods were called upon to witness the fact that the two chiefs were now to be looked upon as brothers, and that if in trouble they must help one another, or in starvation share the last grain of rice.[9]

Sometimes the blood of the parties was mixed with some other liquid — water, beer or spirits.

An instance of this practice is supplied by the natives of Bohol.[1] The Rajah of this island was persuaded to enter into an "amicable understanding" with his European visitors, and this was to be consecrated and confirmed in the manner usual with the islanders. The parties to the treaty of friendship were bled in the arm, whereupon each drank the other's blood diluted with water or spirits. The commander sent a soldier ashore to go through the ceremony, but the Rajah considered this partner beneath his dignity, and substituted his son. The Rajah declared that he would go on board "and be bled with the General" the next day, and the treaty was actually ratified in this way the day after.

We will later quote references to blood ceremonies taken from *Ellis* in his History of Madagascar. He compares Madagascar and Borneo in this respect and says that the similarity in their way of ratifying a friendship by drinking each other's blood is confirmation for the view that at least part of Madagascar was peopled from the same source as the islands of the Malayan Archipelago. A missionary's account of a blood pact among the Dayaks of Borneo, which *Ellis* quotes in this connection, is of interest for us here. This people wished to establish a fraternal agreement with two missionaries, who consented to the requisite ceremony, after some misgivings. Two Dayak notables came forward with small knives to take a little blood from the arm of each of them; this being mixed together in four glasses of water, they drank severally each from the glass of the other, after which they joined hands and kissed. The people then came forward, and made obeisance to the missionaries, as the friends of the Dayak kings.[2]

Riedel describes the blood-bond as it occured among the natives of several islands. In Ceram quarrels between two villages were settled, and peace made after war, in the following way: gifts was exchanged, and a feast was held in one village to which members of the other were invited. The chiefs of both parties dropped some of their own blood into a dish of food in which a sword and other weapons were dipped—this food they now ate one after the other. Then the other village gave a feast identical in its details with the previous one and the bond was sealed. In the Babar Islands the blood of the two parties was mingled with liquor and drunk, when peace was made between two villages and when two persons formed a league of friendship, and also when a man and wife were divorced. In Wetar when a bond was made between two individuals or villages the parties drank each other's blood as a sign of their union. The members of such villages might not intermarry after this ceremony.[3]

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[8] *Roth,* op. cit. II, pp. 206 f.; cf *Hose,* Natural Man, pp. 226 f.; *Beccari,* Wanderings, p. 278.

[9] *Douglas,* An expedition to the Bah country, SMJ 1/1912.

[1] *De Zuñiga,* An Historical View, I, pp. 67 f.

[2] *Ellis,* The History, pp. 190 ff.

In Timor the swearing of eternal friendship was often celebrated by fearful orgies, especially when friendship was being made between families, or tribes, or kingdoms. The ceremony was the same in substance whether between two individuals or large companies. The contracting parties slashed their arms, and collected the blood into a bamboo, into which coarse gin or palm-wine had been poured. Having provided themselves with a small fig-tree they adjourned to some retired spot, taking with them the sword and spear from the sacred room of their own houses if between private individuals, or from the sacred building of their village if between large companies. Planting there the fig-tree, flanked by the sacred sword and spear, they hung on it a bamboo receptacle. After having pledged each other in many libations of gin, each party drank of the mixed blood and gin, leaving a small quantity, which was poured into the bamboo suspended on the tree. Then each swore, "If I be false, and be not a true friend, may my blood issue from my mouth, ears, nose, as it does from this bamboo," on which the bottom of the receptable was pricked to allow the blood and gin to escape. The tree remained and grew as a witness of the contract. *Forbes* states that it was one of their most sacred oaths, and was never violated, at least between individuals. If a member of a family of a king married into that of another, the two kingdoms swore friendship, and when the one was at war the other was bound to send to aid him. It sometimes happened that the family of one rajah had married into the families of two other rajahs, and if these were at war together, he was in the difficult position of having to send aid to both. One blood-brother coming to another's house was in every respect regarded as free, and as much at home as its owner. Nothing was withheld from him; even his friend's wife was not denied him, and a child born of such a union was recognised by the husband as his.[4] When there had been a raid by one tribe on the fields or herds of the tribe in a neighbouring kingdom, a messenger was sent to the raider's rajah to tell him of it. If the rulers of the two kingdoms were united by the sanctity of the blood-bond, the affair was settled after long parleys and discussions, by the payment of a price agreed on.[5]

Forbes observed some oath ceremonies among the inhabitants of the island of Buru which were probably connected with the blood-pact. We mention these because there are several features and accessories which we will later encounter in various African blood ceremonies. *Forbes* says that one form of adjuration was to drink, after making their declaration, water in which had been placed salt, a blade of grass, a lance and a knife. *Forbes* suggests that the association of these weapons with the oath signifies that their bodies should be pierced, cut and run through if they had sworn falsely.[6]

In the north-western part of New Guinea, among the Papuans, it is said that the natives cut both their own arms and those of their visitors with a sharp bamboo. The mutual sucking of the blood from these wounds constituted their oath, and implied a promise to do each other no mischief.[7] It is noteworthy that blood-friendship in New Guinea carried with it claims as of true relatives. *Hagen* points out that when a certain missionary died, his native blood-friends, in accordance with their custom, took all his personal property, watch, knife, clothes, etc., into their possession and divided them among them. The missionaries who had hurried from the coast were at first astonished and enraged, as they were not acquainted with the custom.[8]

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[3] *Riedel,* De sluik- en kroesharige Rassen, pp. 129, 202, 342, 447.

[4] *Forbes,* On some of the tribes, p.

[5] *Id.,* A Naturalist's wanderings, p. 450.

[6] *Ib.* p. 395.

The ceremony of establishing "blood-brotherhood" between bride and groom is found here and there, but sometimes only in one of its survivalistic forms. The Papuans performed a blood-mixing rite between bride and groom after elopement and agreement.[9] A similar act at betrothal is reported from Northern Borneo.[1] Sometimes the marriage ceremony involved a combination of survivals, and the marriage contract was considered to have the character of a blood-bond.[2]

A rather late instance of a blood-pact is reported from the Philippines. The revolt of 1896—98 against the Spaniards was instigated by a secret league which required its members to cut themselves on the leg or arm; they signed the roll of fraternity with their blood, and the cicatrice from the wound served as an identifying mark.[3]

The Australians were prone to blood-letting, and it played a prominent part in several of their customs. Blood was regarded as a rejuvenator, an imparter of courage and litheness, and it was used in many sacred ceremonies. The drinking of blood together prevented the possibility of treachery; if a party wished to set out on an expedition against the people of a neighbouring locality, and had one of these people in their camp, they would get him to drink some of their blood with them, either willingly or unwillingly on his part, whereupon he would be bound not to aid his friends by giving them warning of their danger.[4] A feature of an initiation ceremony found in New South Wales was that the initiate should drink the blood of his companions, apparently with the idea of securing his union with the clan.[5]

References to blood ceremonies among the North American Indians are few. Professor *Murdock* tells me that "such customs are apparently quite rare in native North America"; and in the same letter he points out that the artificial kin relationship entered into by Haida and Tsimshian chiefs, described in his book "Our Primitive Contemporaries", does not involve any actual transfer or mixing of blood.[6] Professor *Eggan* says that he is not aware of any use of the blood-pact among the Plains Indians in aboriginal or semi-aboriginal times. In general, the customs in the Plains were to establish artificial kinship relationships by the process of adoption.[7]

There is an early reference to the sealing of pacts by blood among the Indians of New Albion in a work by *Witsen*.[8] Another instance is reported by *Peter Martyr* among the aborigines of Yucatan. When the Indians of Pontonchan concluded a treaty of peace or received new friends in hospitality, they took a drop of blood from their tongue, or hand, or arm, or any other part of the body, in the sight of the new friend.[9] *Trumbull* mentions this, but he gives his own partial interpretation and quotes an entirely irrelevant confirmation from *Bancroft*. Actually, *Bancroft* refers to a compact between an Indian not at all of this tribe and a bird seen in a dream.[1]

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[7] *Major,* Early voyages to Terra Australis, p. 92.

[8] *Hagen,* Unter den Papua's, p. 262.

[9] *Wilken,* Verspreide Geschriften, I, p. 489.

[1] *Rutter-Owen,* The Pagans of N. Borneo, pp. 145 f.

[2] *Wilken,* Vergelijkende Volkenkunde, p. 394; *Perelaer,* Ethnographische, p. 52; *Bock,* Reis in Oost, p. 96.

[3] *Foreman,* The Philippine Islands, pp. 365, 369.

[4] *Spencer-Gillen,* the Arunta, p. 482; *Id.,* The Northern Tribes, pp. 461 f., 596, 598.

[5] *Toy,* Introduction to the History, p. 74.

[6] (Letter, 18/12, 1950); Cf. *Murdock,* Our Prim. Contemporaries, p. 240.

[7] (Letter 28/12, 1951).

[8] *Witsen,* Nord en Oost Tartaryen, I, p. 158.

An interesting instance of consecration by blood is given by *Loeb*. If a boy or a girl among the Coast Pomo Indians of California was destined to become a member of the secret society, he or she had to take an oath, which consisted of a promise of secrecy and the fulfilment of the taboos concerning the sacred animals, grease, and sexual intercourse. Next the yomta, the initiator, took four herbs and rubbed them over the neophyte's body. Finally, either the sponsoring relative whose place the boy was about to take or the yomta scratched the arm of the neophyte and blood was transferred between the neophyte and the relative.[2]

In other articles by *Loeb* about the Eastern and the Western Kuksu cult, he mentions scratching sticks and scratching to draw blood but nothing about transference of blood.[3]

Two scenes from the Twentieth Century-Fox Production "Broken Arrow", after Elliot Arnold's book "Blood Brother".

Elliot Arnold in his book, "Blood Brother", makes an Apache Indian perform the blood-mixing rite with a white man—they cut their arms and the blood flowed into a goblet. Then their arms were placed together so that the incisions covered each other and the flowing blood commingled, whereupon they each took the cup which had the blood of the other and drank. Another passage from this book depicts a blood mixing rite between the white man and his Indian bride. A shaman made a small incision on the index finger of each party, pressed the two cut places together and quickly bound the fingers with a twisted thong.[4]

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[9] *Anghiera,* Petrus Martyr de insulis nuper repertis.

[1] *Bancroft,* Native Races, I, p. 741. He gives a curious instance, saying of certain Mexican tribes that if one of them wished to make "a close connexion, friendship, alliance, family or blood relationship" with another, its members seized a man of the latter tribe, and, having made him intoxicated, pierced his ears with awls and smeared themselves with his blood. *Ib.* pp. 636 f.

[2] *Loeb,* Pomo Folkways, pp. 364, 368.

[3] *Id.,* The Western and the Eastern Kuksu Cult, pp. 128, 225, 229.

[4] *Arnold,* Blood Brother, pp. 453 f., 408.

We mention this instance from fiction because the author says that an Apache known to him had such a rite at his own marriage. However, Miss *Gillmor* of the University of Arizona tells me, "I myself know of no blood pacts among American Indians. I have always looked upon talk of blood pacts as white man's folklore about Indians. Certainly that is true of the Navajos, the tribe I know best. I know very little about the Apaches, however, and referred your question to Dr. Edward Spicer of the Department of Anthropology here at the University of Arizona. He said that it was possible that the Apaches had taken the custom from Mexican or American traders and fur trappers who had been in Apache country, of course, at the time covered by the picture "Broken Arrow". He was going to look up more material about this . . ."[5]

In a further letter Miss *Gillmor* writes, "This is just a brief addition to my earlier letter about the blood pact. Neither Dr. Spicer nor I have been able to find any indication of the existence of a blood pact among the Apaches in the literature on them. However I talked to Elliot Arnold, author of Blood Brother, the novel upon which the moving picture was based, and he tells me that an Apache who lives here in Tucson told him that he had had such a rite at his own marriage. I do not know this Apache, but understand from other people that from childhood he has been much among white people, and has travelled and had jobs all over the United Stated. So it may be that there was some white influence there."[6]

Thus, a survey of the available material concerning the American Indians yields but few references to blood-mixing rites and we would suspect that many of the ideas with reference to the blood-pact derived from elsewhere and must sometimes be looked upon as white man's folklore about Indians. The blood transference in the Pomo initiation ceremony may be derived from some sort of blood sacrifice, or is perhaps a vestige of the giving of tribal mark, and not in its original significance a mixing of blood. When *R. F. Burton,* the famous traveller in Africa, says of the Dakotas that they were fond of adoption and of making brotherhood like the Africans, it is certain that he did not have the genuine African blood-mixing rites in mind, because no instances of blood-brotherhood ceremonies have been observed among the American Indians comparable with those of the Africans, which will be described in the following chapter.[7]

We will conclude this chapter with a brief survey of the blood-pact as it occurs among the Gypsies. The practise may be traced to branches of this people in various parts of Europe. It is used both in the conclusion of treaties of friendship between two men, not necessarily both Gypsies, and often in the mixing of blood between bride and bridegroom.

We will first consider a blood-pact among the Swedish Gypsies. Taikon, former chief of the Swedish Gypsies, mentions instances of a blood rite involved in the creation of foster-brothers *(troscholéske pral).* This rite proceeds in the following manner: On a Friday morning, before they have eaten, the foster-brothers to be make incisions in their right forefingers, and then lick a drop of each other's blood, saying meanwhile: "You drink my blood, I drink yours, so we are foster-brothers." The ceremony takes place in front of the other members of the community. In this way the unlucky one secures for himself some of the other's good fortune and happiness.[8]

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[5] (Letter 28/12, 1950).

[6] (Letter 10/1, 1951).

[7] *Burton,* City of the Saints, p. 144.

Blood plays a part in the love magic of the Gypsies. A Gypsy woman explained to *Wlislocki* that an exchange of blood was an exchange of love. He also gives instances of the significance of blood for the Gypsies in Serbia and South Hungary, where on the wedding night the young bride tried unnoticed to smear a little blood from her left hand on the hair of the crown of her husband's head to keep him true for always; and from North Hungarian tribes, where bride and groom smear the soles of each other's left feet with their blood before crossing the threshold.[9]

We have two instances of blood-mixing among the Gypsies in Spain. *Cowles* describes how two Spanish Gypsies made incisions on their right wrists with an old pocket-knife, placed the wounds together so that the blood mingled, and thus became blood-brothers. The cuts were shown to the other Gypsies who all approved the action.[1] *Eleanor Smith* mentions a blood bond between a Spanish Gypsy and a non-Gypsy. They gashed their two arms and mingled their blood.[2]

In Great Britain, Gypsy marriage was by elopement, ratified by a public ceremony—with the approval of the headman. *Thompson* has recorded instances of bride and groom partaking of each other's blood when they marry. His circumstantial account mentions two cases where the bride and groom mixed blood from their wrists in flour which was baked into a cake and eaten by the two. One couple repeated the rite each year on the anniversary of their marriage. A couple married about 1850 was also said to have eaten such a cake. Another Gypsy had his bride drink some of his blood to "blind her to him right and proper" some time early in the nineteenth century. *Thompson* further states that some British Gypsies believed that a woman could make a man desire her by smearing him with her blood.[3]

It is noteworthy that *Winstedt* is of the opinion that this may be a relic of Indian ritual, as in India in some tribes the bridegroom marks the bride on the brow with a drop of his blood, and among other tribes blood is drawn and mixed with food, which they eat together.[4]

I have not been able to find a reference to blood-brotherhood between two Gypsy men in England. Miss *Yates* of the Gypsy Lore Society says that "between Gypsies themselves in England it is of very rare occurence, but as a bond of "Blood Brotherhood" between Romanies and Gaje a few instances of this ceremony have been recorded in England and Bulgaria."[5]

Charles Payne gives a detailed description of such a ceremony, in which he was himself one of the pacticipants; it seems advisable to quote him in full:

"For a man born a *Gajo* to become an actually accepted brother of the *taca Romani* is a rare thing and the initiation ceremony with its mixing of the blood probably known only to the few *Gajos* who have undergone it. My own took place more than forty years ago and I have never met with any older of my race who has shared this rite. The two families to whom I was made full blood brother belonged to a branch of the Lovells and to the Herons (or Hurons), who at that period were travelling in the South. Both these small groups were of the *Puro Kalo Rat* and like all the older Gypsies had no love for the *Gajos*. I was only a lad then but I had been on the *drom* for some time, vagabonding in general, and had met one or two of these people previously. I was fortunate to arrive on the scene when a *cai* of their company lay seriously ill and they were practically without means. At the time I was quite affluent for a rover, having something like *bis bar* (£20) in my possession, and through a member of the Lovell family with whom I was friendly I eventually persuaded them to allow me to call and pay for a doctor. This *cai* was one Sinfai Lovell and her fiancé was Sampriel Huron, whom they nicknamed 'the Beng.' He was a black Gypsy all right and the worst hater of *Gajos* I ever met, but because of my help he became my greatest friend. It was some time before the *cai* was well enough for me to see her again, but they gave a feast to celebrate her recovery and insisted on my being present. It was at this *hobben* that they made me a full member of their families by the old ceremony of the Tie or Blood-mixing.

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[8] *Tillhagen,* Taikon berättar, pp. 48, 50.

[9] *Wlislocki,* Menschenblut im Glauben der Zigeuner, pp. 62, 93; *Id.,* Aus dem Leben der Zigeuner, p. 95.

[1] *Cowles,* Gypsy Caravan, p. 43.

[2] *Smith,* Gypsy Musicians of Seville, pp. 111 f.

[3] *Thompson,* Gypsy Marriage in England, pp. 163 ff.

[4] *Winstedt,* Forms and Ceremonies, pp. 345 f.

[5] (Letter 6/7 1951.)

After the food was finished the whole company sat in a circle around the *yog* and I was called upon to ask what I considered a reasonable reward for my services. I had no desire to profit from the little I had done, but they insisted, and 'The Beng' gruffly said that neither he nor his could remain *pazorus* (indebted) to me, and I must ask something in return. If I remember correctly I asked that I might be assured of their friendship at any future meeting and occasionally share a camp with them if ever we met. At that time I had hardly any knowledge of Romanes except a few words of the *poggerdi cib,* but I can give the gist of the reply as I remember it.

Sampriel Huron stood up and said: "Gajo, we Romani pay our debts, whatever they be. I owe you my *romni's* life and money never pays a debt like that. No Gajo can share my camp or food: only *Pens* and *Pals,* so you must be a *Pal* before your wish can be granted." The *Serengro,* Perro, then came up to us and called also young Fero Lovell of the other family. With his *curi* he then made tiny cuts in my wrists and also in the right wrist of Sampriel and the left wrist of Fero. The right arm of 'The Beng' was placed along my own so that the two cuts lay over each other and the wrists were tied with a piece of gold-coloured ribbon. My left arm was tied in a similar fashion to that of Fero, only with a white ribbon. Then Perro spoke a kind of ritual in which he said that I was now blood kin to both families and from then on I must live Romani-wise and keep the Romani law, as all their people did. What I learned I must not reveal so long as my *Pens* and *Pals* of the two families lived. I could share their camps and all they had at will. They could not give a life in return but by this blood tie I became a Romani in all but birth, and so long as I kept the law of the Gypsies I was free of all they possessed at any moment, and in times of need or trouble any of these *Pens* and *Pals* were bound by this ceremony to stand by me. He ended by putting this question to me: "Gajo, do you swear to keep the Romani law and to live

Romani-wise among our people whenever we meet?" On my promising this he touched first Sampriel then myself and lastly Fero over the heart with his knife point. Then came the *cai* Sinfai, who held our tied wrists as she said: "To pay my debt, Brother, they have mixed your blood with my people's but only a Romani name can be used for you, so with me and mine let it be Anselo Rossermeskro." She then united the gold ribbon, which she cut in three equal parts and gave one to me, one to Sampriel and kept the other herself. From the Lovell family came old Zylpha Lowell whom I called "Grannie". She did exactly as Sinfai had done and named me for her people "Pulci Kamomeskro"; but this old lady was a 'card', and she treated her part as a huge joke and finally ended up by presenting me with about two inches of the white ribbon and tying the remainder around her leg as a garter. It sounds rather a simple ceremony as I write it, but at the time it was a serious thing to all concerned, and I know that the *Romani foki* of those two families were sincere enough about it. I learned too that it was no empty bond but meant all and more than was promised me.

The year would have been about 1901—2, and this ceremony or rite took place in Kent, in an old camp beyond Maidstone on the Canterbury road. About eight of the Lovells were present and I think ten of the Heron family: Zylpha, Tina, an Fero Lovell were the older ones, and Perro, Sampriel, Sinfai of the Heron family. As all these old *Pens* and *Pals* have long passed over to the 'Other *Drom*' I break no promise nor betray the law of the Gypsies in putting this old custom on record. Such things too often are lost to those who follow on and I believe they help —when recorded—to give a truer picture of the *Puro Romani* than is usually the case where real knowledge is lacking. Having received two names, it was rather a puzzle which to use, but I solved the difficulty by adopting a combination of both, and in the many years I shared *drom, tan* and *vardo* with my old *Pens* and *Pals* I became known by the one below:

Anselo Kamomeskro (Charles F. Payne.")[6]

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[6] *Payne,* An initiation ceremony, JGLS, pp. 72 f.

CHAPTER II

The Blood-pact in Africa and Madagascar

East Africa and the Lacustrine area

In the northern corner of East Africa, in the Ethiopian region, blood-brotherhood seems to be practically unknown. The only instances we have been able to find are from the Danakil and the Galla. According to *Reinisch,* two person of this tribe may seal a pact by drinking blood taken from the other's hand.[1]

There is negative evidence in the case of the Kafitsho, as *Bieber* says that blood-brotherhood is not practised amongst them.[2]

But, when we turn southward, the instances reported are exceedingly numerous. We may begin with the Kikuyu. *Lugard* states that the method of concluding blood-brotherhood among the Kikuyu varies only slightly among the different groups in the region. We may consider some accounts of the custom as practised in these districts, in order to be able to decide whether *Lugard's* pronouncement holds water. He himself relates an instance of what he calls, "the most solemn form of compact for friendship that exists among them ... known as blood-brotherhood."[3]

He goes on to describe the procedure in the following terms. The two parties sit down crosslegged on mats and skins, and each cuts his forearm till the blood flows. The arms are then rubbed together to mix the blood, and two small pieces of meat are supposed to be touched with the blood "... he eats the piece which has my blood on it off the palm of my right hand, and I eat the piece which has his blood on it from his palm." Sometimes the incision for the bleeding is made elsewhere than on the arm. The headmen of the chief take his weapons of war—his spear and sword and bow—and holding them over his head, make a long speech, praising the warrior's valour and exploits. They swear that the two are henceforward brothers. The chief's lands and food and house "are mine by day or night, and he will forever be my friend." To make the speech more effective, the arms held over the chiefs head are struck continually (to emphasize the point of each sentence) with a spear or sword.

Another description of this custom among the Kikuyu is given by *Routledge,* and his version diverges somewhat from the above account of the procedure. A sheep, says *Routledge,* is provided and custom requires that two elders should take part in the ceremony. The sheep is killed, and the heart taken out and roasted. A slit is made over the end of the sternum, and in the

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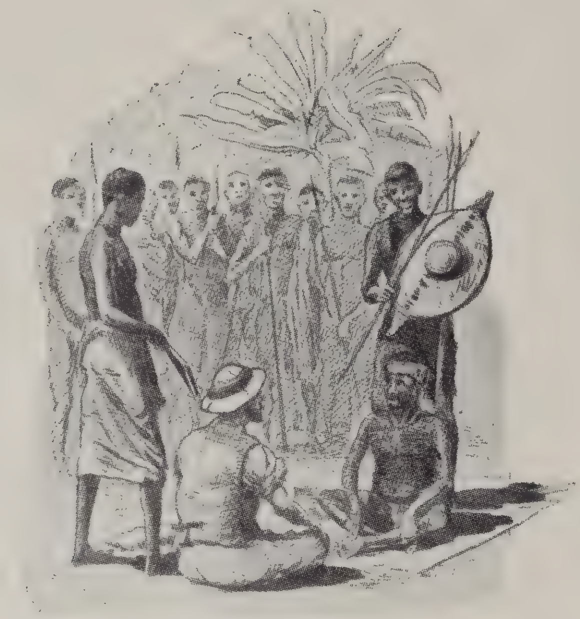
[1] *Reinish,* Die 'Afar-Sprache, II, p. 59. Cf *Paulitsche,* Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas, pp. 137, 143.

[2] *Bieber,* Kaffa, II, p. 239.

[3] *Lugard,* The Rise of, I, pp. 329 f.; Cf. *Id.,* Treaty-making in Africa, pp. 53 ff.



Blood-brotherhood, Kikuyu (after F. D. Lugard).

forehead "at the root of the nose of each of the persons to be united. The blood from each slit is placed by him from whom it has been drawn in the heart of the sheep. One of the elders cuts the heart in two portions, and each of the contracting parties eats one half. The elders receive one leg of the sheep as their fee, and other persons present eat the sheep."[4]

Routledge also describes a blood ceremony among the Kikuyu to initiate a stranger into the tribe. The act which then takes place is public, and the blood employed is not that of the contracting parties. A sheep or an ox is killed for each party. A strip is cut from the belly of each animal as well as a piece of skin from a leg of each. Blood from each of the two animals is put into one leaf, and the contents of the two bellies into another leaf. The elders take the two pieces of skin from the leg and the two strips from the bellies and make four wristlets: ". . .the two coming from the beast of one party is placed on the right arm of the other party, and vice versa. The elders then take the two leaves containing blood, and both parties to the transaction extend their hands; the elders pour a little blood into all the four palms and this is passed from the palms of the one person to those of the other." All those present are called to see that the blood is mingled, and hear the proclamation that the two are now one blood.[5] Sometimes the "brothers" shake hands, after having dipped them in the blood of a slaughtered animal.[6] Sometimes the compact is formed by exchanging pieces of slaughtered animal. The Reschiat of Lake Rudolph become brothers with strangers by eating pieces of the liver of a sheep together. Or they hang strips of its paunch on the necks of those with whom they are making friends.[7]

In the above account by *Routledge,* where the incision was made on the contracting parties, it was pointed out that the manner of applying the cut may vary. An instance of another method of incision, where the inoculation is also somewhat different, is to be found in *Arkell-Hardwick's* description of the way in which he contracted blood-brotherhood with a Kikuyu chief who wished to make *muma* or blood-brotherhood with the traveller. It was rather a long affair. They brought a sheep with them, and this was killed and the liver "cut out and toasted. Koromo (the chief) and I then squatted on the ground facing each other, while our men on the one side and Korom's friends on the other formed a circle round us. A spear and a rifle were then crossed

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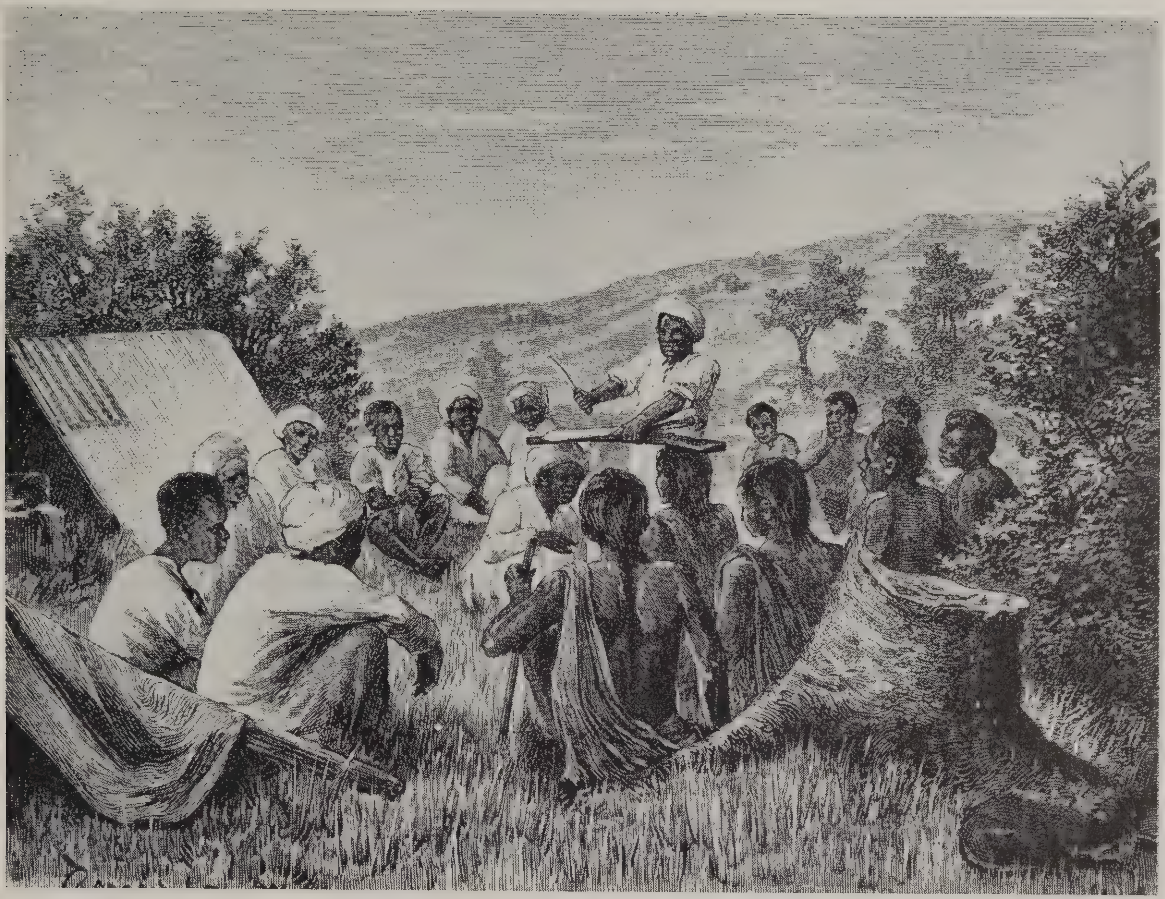
[4] *Routledge,* With a Prehistoric People, p. 176.

[5] *Routledge,* op. cit. pp. 176 ff.

[6] *Schuver,* Reisen in oberen Nilgebiet, p. 50.

[7] *Donaldson-Smith.* Through Unknown, p. 297; *Paulitsche,* Ethnographie, pp. 249 f.



Blood-brotherhood, Kikuyu (after v. Höhnel).

over our heads, and N'Dominuki, as master of ceremonies, then took a knife and sharpened it alternately on the spear-blade and the gun-barrel, reciting the oath of *muma* meanwhile. It was a long, rambling kind of oath, amounting in fact to an offensive and defensive alliance, with divers pains and penalties attached." These were to take effect in the event of either or both of the blood-brothers breaking the said oath. At the conclusion of N'Dominuki's speech the assembled spectators shouted the words "Orioi muma" three times. Three incisions were then made in my chest, just deep enough to allow the blood to flow, and a similar operation was performed on Koromo. N'Dominuki then ordered the toasted sheep's liver to be brought. The liver was now cut into small pieces, and a piece was handed to both Koromo and his guest. A further recitation of the penalties of breaking the oath was made by N'Dominuki, and again the spectators shouted "Orioi muma". Koromo and his guest then dipped their pieces of liver in their own blood, and "amid breathless silence exchanged pieces and devoured them. This was repeated three times to the accompaniment of renewed shouts from the spectators. The remainder of the liver was then handed round to the witnesses, who ate it." The ceremony was thus concluded, and it only remained for the narrator to make his new blood-brother a present.[8]

In his account, which also deals with the Embu tribe in the Kikuyu region, *Hardwick* remarks that in his experience such contracts were not altogether reliable, in spite of assurances like those mentioned above. For just after the contraction of blood-brotherhood with the Embu they were attacked by that tribe.[9]

On the other hand, another traveller who entered into similar contracts with two sons of the principal head men of this tribe declares that they were always loyal to the bond.[1]

Another somewhat varying version of the ceremony taking place in connection with the contraction of the bond of blood-brotherhood among the same people is given by *v. Höhnel.* He says that the ceremony of making blood-brothers was gone through almost every day. The proceedings were as follows. A sheep was provided by the natives, and this was killed beforehand so that the liver and part of the shoulder might be roasted during the ceremony.

"When all was ready the eloquent Kijanja took up his parable; a crossed gun and spear were held over the heads of the two parties to the bond; Kijanja drew his knife and whetted it on the barrel of the gun, whilst he made a long and generally senseless speech ... Then followed the regular speeches, accompanied by the triple repetition of the words 'Orioi muma', the second, signifying 'bloodbrother', being shouted by all in chorus ... The harangue ended, the natives made many protestations of friendship. Death and the wrath of Heaven were invoked on all who should break faith; one arm of each of the contracting parties was gashed, and each wetted his lips with the blood of the other." Then, to the accompaniment of shouts of "Ndugu" (brother) and "Muma" (blood), the broiled flesh was eaten by the two.[2]

If we now cast a glance back at the ritual connected with the contraction of the blood-bond, we see that it differs rather considerably, both as regards the making of the incision and as regards the ingredient of the slaughtered animal used for the occasion.

From *Routledge*'s account we saw also that the blood of animals alone may be used for the rite—in the case of an outsider becoming a member of the tribe. In this connection we may mention that on account of the prohibition against children of blood-brothers marrying—having become by the covenant "blood-relations"—the Theraka say that they never enter into blood-brotherhood with members of other clans; since it is, moreover, an almost senseless undertaking between members of one clan, it is rarely made with anyone but a foreigner.[3]

For a traveller in these regions the blood-pact was of great importance for obtaining food. *Gregory* points out that his headmen were made blood-brothers with the sons of the principal chief of the Kikuyu and permission was then given to the women of the tribe to sell food.[4]

In his monograph on the Kamba, *Lindblom* of course discusses the ceremony of blood-brotherhood and its performance.

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[8] *Arkell-Hardwick,* An Ivory Trader, pp. 147 f.

[9] *Ib.*, p. 84.

[1] *Neumann,* Elephant-hunting, p. 42.

[2] *Höhnel.* Discovery by Count Teleki, I, pp. 314 ff.

[3] *Dundas,* History of Kitui, p. 547; *Browne,* The Vanishing, p. 71, stresses that blood-brotherhood in these regions had the same effect as actual relationship.

[4] *Gregory,* The Great Rift Valley, pp. 159, 158.

He informs us that if two men wish to become blood-brothers the preliminary step is the mutual exchange of presents in the form of beer and goats. The latter they kill and consume together. For the concluding ceremony the two meet in the hut of one of the parties, where the blood-bond is sealed. Each makes a slight incision in the back of his right hand, and sucks the blood which wells forth from the hand of the partner. If either of the parties breaks the bond, he will be overtaken by misfortunes and certain death. *Lindblom* stresses that "this relationship seems to be equally binding and to have the same consequences as the natural relationship, of which it is probably an imitation. The children of the parties look upon each other, and are looked upon, as brother and sisters, and may not marry together. Two men united by such a bond are under the obligation to render each other mutual help. If one of the foster-brothers is a party in a law suit, or if he is charged with some crime, the other appears at the trial, even if he has important affairs of his own to see to."[5]

Lindblom says further that the above account applies to sworn brotherhood between two Kambas but if a Kamba desires to become a blood-brother with a man of another tribe, the procedure is a follows. A goat is killed and cut into pieces. The two men make a little scratch in the inter-clavicular notch and on the chest. The blood which issues is caught on pieces of the goat's flesh, and each man eats a piece with the other's blood upon it. Rings are now cut from the goat's skin, and these they place on each other's fingers. "They are now as brothers born of the same mother, show each other the greatest hospitality, and one of them cannot deny the other anything," said an old man to *Lindblom*. Should one of them be killed while on a visit to his blood-brother, the latter claims the blood-fine from the culprit.

Another variant is reported by *Lindblom*. A person who is being persecuted by an implacable enemy by whom his life is threatened may not only save his life but even turn his foe into a friend if he can manage to get an opportunity of sucking the breast of his wife or daughter, even though the latter may by but a child. The two then become more than friends: they regard one another as brothers.[6]

Hobley gives another illustration of the performance of the rite. He refers chiefly, however, to the Kamba of the Kitui district. He says that the two parties meet and a goat is killed. Two pieces of the liver of the animal are taken and slightly fried on a fire. A small incision is then made in the right forearm, the chest, and the navel of each party, and a spot of the blood from the cuts is smeared on the liver. The two pieces are then exchanged and eaten jointly. This is a very sacred and lasting oath of friendship, declares *Hobley*. If it is broken, the people are very shocked, and it is believed that the god Engai will injure the village of the man who breaks it.[7]

Dundas describes a slightly different form of the ceremony among the Kamba of the Kitui district, where the two men each made small cuts on the back of the other's hand and licked the blood. He says that the brotherhood thus established was most binding, and if broken by either party resulted in his death. The tie passed on to their children after their deaths, but a fresh ceremony between the children was not required. In consequence of this, the children of blood-brothers could never intermarry.[8]

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[5] *Lindblom,* The Akamba,, p. 140; *Hildebrandt,* Ethnograpische Notizen, p. 387, points out that sworn brothers exercised mutual privileges over wives and property.

[6] *Lindblom,* The Akamba, pp. 140 ff.

[7] *Hobley,* Bantu Beliefs, p. 249.

The same author points out that blood-brotherhood plays a part in the reconciliation after homicide. When the murderer had paid the fine required of him, his chief would set about reconciling the murderer and the victim's heir, which was accomplished by making them blood-brothers.[9]

That the Kamba chiefs were willing to enter into blood-brotherhood with travellers passing through their country is evident from *Lugard's* description of his journey in these tracts, for he claims that he was asked to make blood-brotherhood with several of the chiefs.[1]

The missionary *Joh. Raum* gives a good description of the ceremonies of blood-brotherhood among the Djaga.[2] He remarks that blood-brotherhood is here called *mma,* "a word whose etymon is obscure, it also signifies the saliva-bond."

Raum stresses the political character of this bond, especially when it is resorted to as a conclusion of peace between two countries at war, in which case it is contracted between the kings of the two belligerent countries as well as a number of prominent warriors from each country.

According to the same writer, private persons are not entitled to enter such a covenant without the permission of the chief. "*Mma* is thus a state institution," declares *Raum.* It is an institution in the service of the chief. Blood-brotherhood between private individuals must be performed secretly, and it is, moreover, then "very seldom in the form of the blood-bond proper, as a rule only as a saliva-bond."

If a chief is desirous of concluding peace with another chief he sends a messenger with a young girl, a lamb and other gifts. If the messenger succeeds in his mission both parties bind themselves with the magical medium of the blood-bond, It is the form in which peace is solemnly concluded. For this purpose the defeated chief with his following comes on the appointed day to the country of the victor at the latter's invitation. It may, however, happen that the vanquished chief does not yet venture to enter the enemy territory himself, and in this case he sends one of his nearest relatives, so that the latter may for the time being conclude the *mma* in his place.

The blood-brotherhood proper is preceded by a preliminary ceremony called *kitsonu.* The procedure is here as follows. The future blood-brothers place on the middle finger of each other's right hands thin strips of hide in the form of a ring. These strips of hide are cut from the forehead of a freshly killed or still living goat upon which both parties have spat beforehand, so that the blood of the animal is mixed with this saliva. The medium for the blood-bond is thus here the mixture of the saliva of the parties through the blood of the goat. The bond is concluded by the mutual exchange of the 'rings' of hide. The whole ceremony gives the impression, says *Raum,* of a custom handed down from ancient times and not properly understood.

This ceremony may also take place without a subsequent blood-pact. When a chief is visiting another chief for the first time, he does not enter the hut of his host until he has received the *kitsonu* from him and has in his turn given it. European travellers visiting Djaga chiefs were formerly requested first to exchange *kitsonu* with them.

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[8] *Dundas,* History of Kitui, p. 526.

[9] *Dundas,* Kilimanjaro and its people.

[1] *Lugard.* The Rise of, p. 319.

[2] *Raum,* Der Speichelbund, pp. 292 ff.; *Id.,* Die Religion, pp. 182, 190.

The bond entered into through *kitsonu* is valid only as long as the strip of hide is worn on the finger.

As a rule, the ceremony of *kitsonu* has meaning among the Djaga only as a preparation for the real blood-brotherhood.

The place for the performance of the ceremony is the king's residence, where a chosen number of the most distinguished warriors are gathered to act as witnesses. Here an ox-hide is laid on the ground, and upon this the two parties take up their places. At first the two chiefs conclude blood-brotherhood with each other, and their example is then followed by the chosen warriors.

When the two parties have taken their places they "stretch their respective right arms towards each other, so that these lie one upon the other." Invocations are now made and the arms of the two are cut. The blood is smeared upon roasted goat's meat, which is then devoured by the two partners, who thus make an exchange of blood. This is followed by further invocations, whereupon the two blood-brothers enter a hut and each of them takes a mouthful of milk which he spits into the other's mouth. In connection with the pact now concluded there is also a symbolic exchange of garments.

With this blood-bond between the two chiefs and their chosen warriors peace is thus concluded. It should, however, be remembered, remarks *Raum,* that the blood-bond as such always serves only to bind two individuals together. The chiefs and their potentates are political personages, and it is for this reason that a blood-bond concluded between them has political significance.

But if a peace is to be concluded or an alliance to be entered into between two provinces as political entities, further ceremonies are performed in addition to those described above. Thus the blood of a lamb is sometimes sprinkled over the contracting parties. In another case a boy and a girl are circumcised, the blood is collected, mixed wih beer and drunk by the contracting parties.[3]

The spit-brotherhood, as we have seen above, was a pendant to the blood-rite between the kings. It would seem as if this accessory had been as it were separated off and democratized. It is used by a dying person to enable him, or her, as the case may be, to bind the surviving party to take care of the children. It is resorted to in order to be assured that a person to whom the care of property is entrusted may be relied upon, or in order to bind a person to silence when a crime has been committed. Or to silence a neighbour who is aware of the existence of hidden goods on which taxes are levied, and so forth. Women, too, enter into this contract. The procedure is simple. The parties take a mouthful of some beverage–milk, beer or the like–, and spit it into each other's mouths, or into a bowl from which it is then drunk. Thus *Volkens,* describing this in his opinion rather unappetizing custom, writes that "die gegenübersitzenden Kontrahenten sich einen Schuck Pompe wechselseitig in den Mund speien."[4] But according to *Vol-*

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[3] *Raum,* Der Speichelbund, p. 289; With regard to the spit-brotherhood, it is noteworthy that among the Somali and the Galla the saliva bond secures to the stranger all the rights of a tribesman, *Paulitsche,* Ethnographie, p. 246.

[4] *Volkens,* Der Kilimanscharo, p. 157.

kens the rite of blood-brotherhood began with this ceremony. This does not, however, agree with *Raum's* statements. *Raum* asserts that in very urgent cases the one party spits pure saliva into the other's mouth.[5]

Raum particularly stresses that as the relationship created by the *mma* takes absolute precedence over all other relationships, including that to the chief, it is no wonder that the chief does not tolerate such bonds.

It is furthermore worth-while to note that *Raum* emphasizes that the invocations and oaths are essential for the contraction of this alliance and that the gods are considered as avenger and protector of the oath.[6]

The missionary *B. Gutmann,* who worked among the Djaga at Masama in Westmadschame district, also states that the practice is forbidden to individuals but reserved for compacts between clans and eventually between tribes. In the following passage from *Gutmann* it will be seen that chiefs may participate, thus grafting an individual and kinship practice upon a political organization. Another rite that is fully described by *Gutmann* is a sort of "milk-brotherhood", a rite which is followed by the blood-pact in the open air afterwards:

The establishment of a blood-brotherhood always joined two groups, never two individuals only. As a means for forming new group units it is still clearly to be recognized in the case of the *mma* of the Djaga. There the blood-brotherhood was used to join two independent clans. The need of such a union was usually felt because of a third clan which threatened to become troublesome and in regard to which these others wanted to gain the upper hand by their alliance.

This decision to unite two clans was preceded by careful and secret negotiations. First of all a party is formed in the one clan which decides to promote the idea of the new blood-brotherhood. The plan originates with the foresighted older men. As a first step they try to win the leading members of the clan and a part of the young men to their side. The latter are of particular importance since the troublemakers and those that want a row at any cost come from the ranks of the youth. It was no coincidence that the youth class was formerly designated with the word *mbara-hanga,* meaning "Where shall I break (something)?" The older men explain all the advantages of the alliance to the assembled youths and then say: "However, we cannot decide this matter, for it all depends on you; you must adhere to and represent this brotherhood." If the consent of representatives from all age groups has been gained, then it is no longer difficult to win the whole clan for the cause. In accordance with this, the negotiations with the other clan are carried on through go-betweens. Before the two clans fraternize, it frequently happens that each strengthens its own ranks by means of a blood ceremony. They called that *ikufunga,* "to obligate one's self." The purpose presumably was to strengthen the bonds within the clan and to prevent the breaking of the blood-brotherhood by individuals as far as possible. This can scarcely by anything primitive, but since this ceremony is particularly ritualistic it will be presented here at some length.

First of all the clan brothers join in the milk-brotherhood. A bowl is filled with thick milk into which a nursing mother of the sib lets drop some of her own milk. In so doing she utters an incantation: "Whosoever among you brings himself to slander his brother, whoever accuses him or commits treachery against him, into his body may this milk bring sickness and boils, to that men will say of him: "The brotherhood milk brings this plague upon him." But if you are loyal to your brother and stand by his side in times of need, may it preserve and keep you!" The bowl thus adjured is now held out to each participant for a drink. While his lips are on the vessel each individual is addressed, "Should you betray your brother or his children, if you desert him in the battle, if you refuse him the sacrificial goat for his sick child—then die! But if you love him and help him and stand by him, may you be kept and preserved!"

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[5] *Raum,* op. cit. p. 291.

[6] *Ib.,* pp. 292, 294.

This milk-brotherhood was contracted in the hut. In the yard, that is to say, under the open sky, the blood is exchanged, the real blood ceremony performed. This can take place only on an outspread oxhide. Even the spreading of this hide is done while pronouncing forms of cursing and blessing. The officiating old man and the woman who previously gave her milk grasp the hide, swing it and say: "You, the brothers of one sib, have agreed to bind yourselves more securely. Whosoever acts against this brotherhood—may he become as barren as this hide. Let him fall into the pond of the spirits, may he fall into the abyss! All that will be said is: 'It is the hide of the brotherhood that killed him.' But if you are loyal to this brotherhood, etc., may you be preserved and kept!" The participants sit down on this hide. The old man leads up the sacrificial goat which is to give the meat for the ceremony, saying: "you, my brother, etc., may he go the way of this goat (i. e., die)!" This is followed by a blessing on those who are loyal.

Each participant now expectorates four times on the head of the goat. The first one spits and says: "If I harbour hate against any of my brothers, if I plot against him, be it only in thought, may that storehouse sink through the ground." Thus each one assures the others of the purity of his intentions and names a mishap that may take place if he is insincere. The signs of insincerity usually are to affect the intestines. Each one also swears on the head of the goat that he will remain loyal to the brotherhood; if not, may he be destroyed with the goat. Then the goat is killed and the morsels on which the partners' blood later is spread are cut from the breastpiece. The small pieces of meat are roasted slightly for the purpose over a small fire. The two partners sit down on the hide opposite each other and with the aid of the old man perform the blood ceremony. Their right arms are placed close together and while each pronounces curses and blessings in regard to the brotherhood, each also strokes the partner's forearm muscle with his right index finger, up and down the spot where the cut later is to be made. When the mutual adjuration and stroking have been attended to, the old man makes the scratch on the forearm muscle for the blood ceremony proper. The partner immediately leans over and receives the dripping blood in his mouth. After this direct blood exchange, each receives a piece of meat. This he strokes along the wound, back and forth, taking up the remnant of blood. The morsel is put in the partner's mouth. The curses exchanged during the ceremony pertain to the partner's life, his children, his cattle; the wishes for the welfare of the loyal blood-brother invoke good fortune for his issue and property. All is done in conventional and stereotyped phrases as is customary in well-wishing. While still on the hide, spittle is also exchanged. Each member of the brotherhood receives a spoon of milk fresh from the udder. He puts some saliva in it and feeds it to his partner. For this part of the ceremony, the old man adds further incantations: "Whosoever concealed a weapon on his body and pulls it out tomorrow saying: 'Now I can betray my brother'—may the *mma* kill him. Whoever will not adopt the child of his brother when the father has died—may the *mma* kill him," and so on.

Finally the old man hands each pair of brothers a measure of beer. Of this each drinks half while they listen to the old man: "If you are drunk and in that condition speak evil of your brother—may this beer kill you. But if you hurry to him next morning, discuss the matter with him, and atone for your guilt—may you be kept and preserved. If you are invited to drink beer with a clan and thereby let yourself be led to plot against your brother—may this beer kill you, may the *mma* distend your body. If you are present at the beer drinking in the meadow and notice a plot that others are hatching against your brother and you do not hurry away and warn him—may this beer kill you."

At the close of the ceremony all get up and stand beside the hide. The old man and the above-mentioned woman take it up together and swing it with incantations against the breakers of the covenant and enemies of the clan: "May their bodies shrivel, rolled up like this hide." Among the anathemas pronounced while the hide is being rolled up, one deserves special notice. This is the one marking the propagation of the clan as a holy duty with particular emphasis. The woman says: "Whoever sees among you a brother who cannot beget any children and will not help him and says instead: 'Let the woman go away and marry into another clan,' may his body waste like this hide. But if he does what is proper in order to insure posterity for his brother, may he be kept and preserved."

After these adjurations the hide is rolled up and put aside. From now on only old people may use it for sleeping. Finally all gather in the house for another round of beer. Each participant first holds the drinking cup close to his mouth and says: "I have swallowed the *mma* and did not secretly spit it out. If now my brother betrays me, or refuses to help me in times of sickness, or leaves me alone working in the field when I am weak and miserable, then I shall go to another clan and let them save me. First, however, I shall spit out me *mma* again and announce that to him, so that the *mma* does not kill me, but instead saves me."

The goat used for the ceremony is also consumed now. Nothing may be left over except the parts owed to him who supplied it (head, neck, and hide).

Before the new brothers separate, the old man gives them this final admonition: "If you have a quarrel with an alien clan, don't try to settle it alone, but tell your brother about it that he may help you. If you fight alone, they will kill you. If your brother is away and his child takes sick at home—care for it and go to the soothsayer in your brother's stead. Take care of his house as through it were your own. If you two have an argument, settle it quickly. Do not deny anything, but state everything frankly, the way it was. And, being brothers, don't be reconciled with anything but beer; give neither weapons nor goats. Announce this compact to your younger brothers when they are old enough to understand its import. Leave behind for your sons definite information about this brotherhood, in order that they may not quarrel with the members of the clan. They are to know that the *mma* still is operative in them and will kill them, if they break its provisions."

Before two clans joined in the blood-brotherhood, careful negotiations were necessary until each clan in general assembly had expressed its agreement. The blood-brotherhood of two clans was preceded by peaceful settlement of all differences that were pending between individuals of the clans. Also, if someone felt that he had been overcharged in an old lawsuit, the other party returned what he might reasonably ask for.

On the day of the ritual the two clans assembled in the yard of the most prominent one. The intentions of alliance were once more brought before this general assembly and its consent was requested. The men signified their assent with the words: "We are women and pay no attention. You are our leaders, you carry on the negotiations. If anything happens we are the watchdogs and will come on."

The climax of the blood-brotherhood ritual between two clans is the exchange of the blood, as is the case in the intraclan *mma*. Ten men from one clan, or rather five men and five youths sit opposite ten members of the other clan. The old men act as assistants, each of them helping one partner from the other clan. As samples of the imprecations against the traitor, the following may be cited among the more unusual: "Whoever enters into the brotherhood deceitfully, etc., may he fall into the rot of the boabab, may he be restless as the sun, may he climb around in hedges like a chipmunk."

On the day after the ceremony, or within the next few days, the blood brothers exchange presents, goats or cattle according to wealth. The poor man gives his partner at least an oxhide or a calabash of honey.

The last form in which the clan blood-brotherhood has survived is one performed by a chief after the paying of the blood money for a homicide. Four men, two from each of the clans involved, sit down on the ritual hide and contract the alliance. The first adjuration is spoken by the chief himself. The matter is now supposed to be settled, he says, and the fine has been paid. Neither is to remind the other of what happened. He, the chief, hereby unites them and will surely find out if either still harbours evil thoughts. What happened between them in anger must now be forgotten. "You shall be one clan, I unite you as brothers." Still more detailed are the admonitions of the old man who assists. Thus, for example, the representatives of the injured clan are addressed as follows: "You, the clan of the Wamatsa, if you should ever relate to any of your people that one of the Wamalisa caused a death among you, or if you tell a son of yours yet to be born, then you shall be destroyed. But if you remain silent and no longer think of the matter, then you shall be kept and preserved."

From the blood-brotherhood of the clans a blood-brotherhood for provinces was evolved. It is contracted between two provinces and their chiefs and is provided with still greater precautions than the clan *mma*. Usually this provincial *mma* has the purpose of securing a peace treaty already made or to bring about peace. Thus the province

Mbokomu when hard pressed by the Moschi sent a peace messenger to the chief of the latter. The representative also brought along an uncircumcized girl, and a lamb about whose neck leaves from the dragon tree and the *mringaro* tree had been fastened. Arriving at the place of the chief at dawn they managed to rush inside the house of the most important of his wives having a son. This secured for them her help, for to refuse such suppliants aid was considered equivalent to certain destruction. The highest protective power, however, is possessed by the virgin girl and they let the request be carried through her.

The chief of the Moschi immediately had all district leaders summoned and laid before them the request of the Mbokomu for peace and friendship. They received the petition in a friendly manner. The messenger from the Mbokomu was then dismissed with the statement that they were inclined to accept the offer of friendship, but they must first get the consent of the warriors. The girl, however, remained in the hands of the Moschi chief.

Now another delegation consisting of six men with six heads of cattle arrived from the Mbokomu. With an equal number of chosen men from the subjects of the Moschi chief these contracted the first, preliminary blood-brotherhood. The six men returned home with the message that twenty head of cattle be sent for the warriors. This, too, was done. Simultaneously the men of distinction from among the Mbokomu presented themselves and contracted the second blood-brotherhood with an equal number of distinguished Moschi.

For the ceremony they sat opposite each other in one long row on cattle hides laid end to end. The middle hide was laid before the door of the chief. In spreading this middle hide the incantations that accompany the swinging of the hide were pronounced and were valid for all the others. This second blood-brotherhood ceremony created so much confidence that the chiefs themselves ventured to come together. The union of the two tribal chiefs and their men of distinction now took place at the brook Msaranga, on the boundary, in the presence of both tribes. Since that time the crossing place is called the Ford of Blood-Brotherhood.

On the sloping banks the respective tribes had collected. The two chiefs, each with forty of his distinguished men, were at the edges of the brook. This time the blood is not to be exchanged on cattle hides, but while sitting on a rock in the middle of the stream. First the officiating old men carry a goat to the stone in the middle. The two chiefs then pronounce their oaths of loyalty and self-adjurations while expectorating on the head of the goat. The one promises the obedience of a child, the other the full fidelity of a father. The animal is then killed and the blood collected in a wooden vessel. The heart of the goat and morsels from the breastpiece are brought ashore and roasted for the blood ceremony proper. This is now done in the manner already described, i. e., by sucking the blood from the wound on the forearm of the partner. While stroking the place where the scratch is to be made, each implores the other to observe the duties of the brotherhood. Morsels of the roasted goat's heart are passed around on pieces of banana leaf for wiping the wound free from blood; they are then put into the partner's mouth. Self-curses (in case of violation) and promises accompany this act also.

A peculiar and impressive ceremony climaxes this blood-brotherhood of chiefs and provinces. It is the so-called "Brotherhood of the Minors." The girl originally sent by the chief of the Mbokomu as first peace offering is led forward and is joined in the water by a youth from the Moschi province. In the right arm of both, in the proper blood-brotherhood spot, a scratch is made and the blood is allowed to mingle in the wooden vessel already containing the goat's blood. This is also done to the accompaniment of solemn adjurations concerning the brotherhood duties of the two provinces. Into this mixture of blood all sorts of things are put. Brass is scraped and as the shavings drop into the blood the following curse is pronounced: "That is bad iron; if you violate the alliance—may your body distend from it." Lead shavings are put in with the words: "If you violate the alliance—may your blood disperse like molten lead." A dog's bone is also scraped with the vivid curse: "If you violate the alliance, you will be like a sterile bitch. Dogs will die in your fields and you can no longer cultivate them. You will be as unsettled as a lost dog." In closing, the bone of an ass is scraped with the following wish: "If you violate the alliance, suffer the blows of a he-ass."

The bowl with this brew is first received into the hands of the boy from the Moschi. He has to offer the chief of the Mbokomu a drink from it with curse formulas for violations and benisons for loyalty. The curses are particulary directed toward treacherous relations with other chiefs, whose lands are specifically mentioned, one by one. After that the Moschi chief receives the bowl from the Mbokomu girl with wishes in the same sense, changed to apply to him. His territory is threatened by the following curse, for example, in the event of violation: "May your country be governed by a girl, may there be no male issue." A piece of meat is rubbed on the wound of each of the children, handed to the chiefs of the opposite parties, and consumed by them. Finally the two old men take the bowl and pour the remaining blood with solemnity into the water, saying: "Whoever violates this brotherhood, may his blood disperse with this blood."

As the ceremony closed, the onlooking subjects of both chiefs burst into cries of joy and the Moschi went home, singing and dancing to these words: "Beloved Mbokomu! We will love one another like clout strap and thigh."

With this *mma* of the minors, or uncircumcized, as they are more frequently called, all kinds of fables have been connected. They originated because the present generation has had no opportunity of witnessing the actual ceremony. Thus it is claimed that both children were circumcized for the blood ceremony, their blood being mixed and drunk at that time. This, however, would not only have violated the modesty of this people, but would also be contrary to all the circumstances. Such customs as cannot now be actually observed must be accepted with caution. It must be remembered that in the tradition of the natives themselves a false and arbitrary conjunction of mores having widely different origins is often made.

The Masai (settled among the Djaga) have no blood-brotherhood, for which reason they are held in bad repute among the Djaga as violators of the blood-brotherhood. The ceremony itself was of no consequence to them, when, for political reasons, they submitted to it. The blood-brotherhood is replaced among them by the rope brotherhood. This rope brotherhood, however, is nothing but a strong symbolic analogy. It is nothing but a fable, when some authors who have no proofs claim that two children instead of a goat were cut in two at this rope ceremony.

A child's being buried alive at the boundary of a province to warn of hostilities has also been confused with the blood-brotherhood ritual. Thus it is told that ages ago the two children used in the "Blood-Brotherhood of the Minors" were buried and the *mma* contracted over their grave. Even ignoring the fact that no case of this has survived in the memory of the people, the matter is in itself improbable. The sole decisive factor for the blood-brotherhood is, after all, the incorporation of the invoked spirit substance into each and everybody . . .

The blood-brotherhoods described so far are genuine agents for forming groups. They are of far-reaching importance for the whole social pattern and the first incentives for the development of a political system. The blood-brotherhood allied not individuals but definite, organized groups with one another.

In cases where individuals wished to safeguard their fate and their endeavours by means of a special alliance through the blood-brotherhood, they acted in contradiction to a natural law of society and against the interests of their respective groups. The private blood-brotherhood is a corruption phenomenon, a cancer which must be fought against. The main characteristic of the blood-brotherhood between two individuals is also its secrecy and culpability. Such a private ceremony is not carried out with the full ritual, but usually with only one detail. Much favoured is the saliva-brotherhood with milk or beer used as principal liquid.

Reasons for such an illegal *mma* may be: common knowledge of a secret, such as theft, for example; the need to make a promise binding; the safeguarding of one's life. For the last reason, a blood-brotherhood with a friend from a neighbouring province is desirable, since he can give a timely warning if an attack threatens from that quarter.

The most common reason for private brotherhood is placing animals in the care of a friend. Here the brotherhood is contracted either with the person in whose trust the animals are placed, or, more frequently, with a neighbour, who then agrees to protect the newborn calves, etc. If the alliance is made with the caretaker himself, the animal also takes part in the ceremony. The animal is made to swallow a red glass bead with the adjuration that the cow bring suffering upon its temporary master, should he dare to purloin a calf.

The chief punishes such private compacts by taking away cattle from those involved. For the private *mma* the Djaga do not scratch the traditional spot for the blood-brotherhood (right forearm). This is the place generally used for such a cut and therefore discloses the secret alliance to those who know that fact. Instead, the inside of the right upper arm is used. Other peoples have still other spots for the purpose, all of which have in common that they may be looked upon as ordinary scars, of which most men have plenty on most parts of the body.[7]

The French missionary, *Le Roy,* travelled in these regions in 1892. He has given a rather detailed description of the proceedings on the occasion of the fraternization ceremony which took place between himself as the representative of the expedition and the chief of the Djaga. "Foumbia and I were sitting on the same ox-hide in the middle of the big square of the village, our sponsors or those vouching for our integrity proceeded with our interrogation and overwhelmed us with imprecations, which would be terrible indeed if we were unfaithful to our alliance. A white goat having now been killed, incisions were made in Foumbia's arm and in mine. The liver of the victim was divided into six portions, and smeared with the blood from our cuts, and we then gave the pieces to each other to eat. Foumbia's blood was now mine, and mine was his: we were 'brothers' . . . We owed each other friendship, counsel, aid and assistance; our interests were common, our families were sister-families."[8]

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[7] *Gutmann,* Das Recht der Dschagga, pp. 254 ff., *Id.,* Stammeslehren, I, p. 285.

Le Roy thus did not experience any drinking of blood among the Djaga. According to the French cleric, it is evident that on this occasion the rite was performed only by way of inoculation.

Another rite that must not be overlooked in this connection is the milk-brotherhood mentioned by *Gutmann*. A milk covenant may be made among the Djaga by members of one clan by drinking the milk of a clan-sister inside a hut, the rite being followed by the blood covenant in the open air afterwards.[9]

The drinking of milk may, however, take place after the conclusion of the ceremony proper. So it would appear, at least, from an interesting example communicated by *Augustiny,* who also gives an account of a ritual for the conclusion of a blood-pact which more or less follows *Gutmann* as regards the exchange of blood. He relates in a Djaga text that when the chief abdicates he summons the people, and in the course of the blood-brotherhood ritual which he celebrates with his successor and son he announces that the latter shall take over the government of the tribe. The ceremony requires the king to cut his arm, and the son sucks up the blood of his royal sire. The queen-mother then brings milk and the participants in the ceremony drink.[1]

A similar "milk-brotherhood", according to *Dannholtz,* seems to have obtained among the Pare, but it does not appear to have preceded the blood-brotherhood ritual as in *Gutmann's* version is the case among the Djaga. The form taken by the blood-brotherhood ceremony among the Pare seems otherwise not to differ to any extent worth mentioning from that described by *Le Roy* among the Djaga. The contracting parties who intend to "eat the blood-bond" *(Kula mma)* are cut by the priest. If they are men, the incision is made near the pit of the stomach, if they are women, in the forearm. A buck goat is slaughtered, the flesh is roasted and dipped in blood from the contracting parties, and each of them thus partakes of his blood-brother's blood. The master of ceremonies then gives to both parties the usual counsel and warnings against a breaking of the covenant.

A blood-pact may also be concluded between whole tribes who have been at feud with each other. "In full view of both armies the two chiefs, as representatives of their peoples, eat the blood-bond."[2]

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[8] *Le Roy,* Au Kilima-Ndjaro, pp. 231 f., *Id.,* La religion des Primitifs, pp. 119 f.

[9] *Gutmann,* Das Recht, loc. cit.; *Richards,* Hunger and Work, p. 208. According to *Hoernle, Richards* states that "among the Zulu and the Pondo the drinking of the milk of another clan is tantamount to pledging blood-brotherhood with him and prevents marriage with a clan." p. 96. *Hoernle.* p. 481.

[1] *Augustiny,* Geschichte der Häuptlinge in Wadschame, pp. 186 f.

Meyer describes a blood-brotherhood concluded with the Pare. He himself refused the request of the black commander of the frontier troops to enter blood-brotherhood in his own person with the proud retort that he concluded blood-brotherhood only with kings. The hosts had therefore to content themselves with one of his guides as a proxy.

We find here another instance of the frequently occuring difference in the performance of this rite even within one and the same tribe. Thus *Meyer* relates that the contracting parties were gashed in the vicinity of the heart, whereupon they licked away the drops of blood oozing from the wounds. At the same time they exhorted each other to be faithful to the alliance. The bystanders accompanied the proceedings with song.[3]

Another traveller emphasizes that the blood-brothers' seconds at the ceremony enjoin the brothers-to-be to hold their property in common and to avenge each other's death if necessary.[4]

New visited the Teita, and describes the way in which they declared mutual brotherhood and pledged it in each other's blood. Each drew blood from his breast near the heart and took a little of the other's blood on his finger, which he touched to his tongue. Henceforth they regarded each other as brothers, and pretended that neither would ever do the other wrong. *New* refused to have anything to do with such a ceremony, saying that his pledge was his "bare but honest word". They replied that words were only words, and they regretted that he would not pledge them in their own way. They feared that he might become blood-brother to the chief of the Djaga and give that chief advantages over them. They could not entertain such cordial feelings towards him as they would otherwise have done, and if any misfortune happened to them after his departure, they would attribute it to the evil of his feet.[5]

However, another traveller in this region complains that, although the Teita respected their oath when it was a question of protecting a blood-brother's life, this did not prevent them from relieving him of his property.[6]

Nor did they have any objection to a blood-pact with a woman. A white woman who visited the Teita made such a pact with them.[7]

Among the Duruma, a tribe of the Digo-Nika group, two persons who wished to make their friendship lasting entered into blood-brotherhood, and celebrated the occasion with a feast consisting of a fowl, rice and wine. Since there was no magic in the rite, anyone might conduct the ceremony and there was always a person present for that purpose. While two small pieces of the fowl's liver were being roasted on skewers, this person made a small incision in the pit of the stomach of each friend. Having rubbed two pieces of the meat in their blood he handed each of them the piece that had been rubbed in the blood of the other. While the two friends stood side by side with a native sword resting on their heads, this person tapped the sword all the time with a knife and the two brothers to be repeated in turn: "If I do anything against you or against your family, or if I hear anything against you or your family and do not tell you, or if you are in need at any time and I do no help you, let me die." Then they swallowed the meat.[8]

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[2] *Dannholz,* Im Banne, pp. 106 ff.

[3] *Meyer,* Ostafrikanische Gletscherfahrten, p. 180; Cf. *Kotz,* Im Banne, pp. 127 f.

[4] *Decken's* Reisen, I, p. 252.

[5] *New,* Life, Wanderings, and Labours, p. 364; Cf. *Hobley,* Upon a visit, p. 549.

[6] *Decken's* Reisen, I, p. 248.

[7] *French-Sheldon,* Customs among, p. 383. Cf. Id., Sultan to, p. 402.

The Sania often made blood-brotherhood with the Giriama. A goat would be brought by one of the parties to the spot where the ceremony was to take place. The Giriama seized it by the hind legs and the Sania by its forelegs, and the father of one of them cut its throat with a knife. If neither of them had a father living, the goat would be killed by the head Giriama present.

The contracting parties then sat down opposite each other and each man made two cuts over the breast bone of the other with a knife, so that the blood flowed. In the meantime, the man who killed the goat had taken out its liver and was roasting in at the fire. When the meat was slightly cooked he cut off two pieces from it and handed one to each of the contracting parties, who took it and rubbed it in the blood on their own chests. Each of these then handed his piece of meat to the other, promised to help him in everything, and in the future to look upon him as his brother. Each ate the meat smeared with the blood of the other, and the ceremony was completed.[9]

In his work on the customs and usages of the Suaheli tribes, where he also discusses blood-brotherhood and the performance of the associated rites and ceremonies, *Velten* expresses the opinion that inoculation of some kind is the commonest procedure at this ceremony. The meat used for the rite is chiefly hen's or goat's liver. Further details mentioned by *Velten* are the roasting of the meat and the arrival of the master of ceremonies with knife and whetstone. The latter personage delivers long speeches, whets his knife over the heads of the contracting parties in order to frighten them, "so that they may live together as friends, and their friendship be not abruptly broken off." The two contracting parties sit on a mat, they are scratched with the knife and the resulting blood is smeared on the animal's liver, which is then eaten by both of them.[1] *Niese* says that the ceremony takes place with hen's liver and the blood of the contracting parties as inoculation. He adds that such contracts may also take place between tribes and between women.[2]

The drinking of blood is nonetheless rather common on the East Coast. Among the Ribe and the Rabai, tribes from which *Johnstone* has communicated some interesting details, there is, it is true, no drinking of blood. Here the ceremony consists in both the parties having a small wound inflicted and a few drops of blood being applied from the wound of the one to that of the other and vice versa.[3]

But among other coastal tribes we find that the drinking of blood is the prevailing custom.

Thus among the Bondei, Zeguha and Shambala the ceremony was as follows. A member of an alien tribe living in one of these districts might establish blood-relationship with the head of a family "by scarifying his chest and giving his friend some of the blood to drink, whereupon his friend did the same.[4]

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[8] *Griffits,* Glimpses of a Nyika Tribe, p. 287.

[9] *Barrett,* Notes on the Customs, pp. 34 ff.

[1] *Velten,* Sitten, pp. 302 f.

[2] *Niese,* Das Personen- und Familienrecht, pp. 240 f.

[3] *Johnstone,* Notes, p. 268. He says further "that after this their property is treated as being held in common, and I have even seen a case of a wife being taken by a blood-brother, though I believe that this is unusual." p. 268. Cf. *Baumann,* Völkerkunde, p. 188.

Oskar Baumann states that even direct blood-sucking takes place. The two contracting parties, who are always of the same sex, according to *Baumann's* account, take up their places on a mat. They eat chicken and some rice. After this their little fingers are scratched in the presence of witnesses and they suck blood from each other's fingers. The same custom, it is interesting to note, is also applied when young women wish to procure a "mama" for the house to replace the deceased one.[5]

But other rites are also practised in connection with blood-brotherhood among the Shambala. According to *Wohlrab,* the ceremony in this tribe takes the following form. The contracting parties sit opposite each other with legs apart and with their arms laid upon each other's shoulders. They then make long speeches to each other, and the master of ceremonies also delivers a speech to the two "brothers". From the cut that has been made in the middle of the body he then wipes off the blood with a nut, and gives the blood-smeared nut to the other party. The first man now takes the latter's hand, in which the nut is held, and guides it to his partner's mouth. At the same time he says, "Friend, eat my blood, and then I shall eat yours . . . Blood-brotherhood is something greater than blood-relationship" etc.

Finally, the one in whose hut the ceremony has taken place takes his blood-brother around the hut, showing him everything and saying, "When I am not at home, everything is at your disposal."

Wohlrab declares that among the Shambala even women may conclude blood-brotherhood. The incision is then made on the forearm. In the speeches exchanged by the parties in this case special stress is laid upon the solicitude of both for the children.

On the other hand, according to *Wohlrab*, there seems not to have been any contraction of blood-brotherhood between groups.[6]

A slight variation of the Shambala blood ceremony is described by *Heinrich Lang.* According to him, the ritual was as follows: each of the two participants made a slight incision in the skin over the heart, took a small piece of meat from a fowl or goat—or failing that, a nut—and placed it on the other's cut. They then ate these bloody morsels and recited an oath. Their object in entering this relation was to pledge protection and help to one another. The stronger had to give assistance to the weaker whenever it was necessary. They continued to hold their property separately, but each must give to the other if he was in need, maintain his family if he died, and must avenge his blood-brother if murdered. Only members of different families could become blood-brothers.[7]

It was mentioned above that, according to *Wohlrab,* the Shambala seem not to have contracted blood-brotherhood between groups. But this does not seem to have been the case among the neighbouring Digo, where, according to *Damman,* a small clan often found it desirable to make an alliance with a larger and more important clan by means of a blood-pact.[8]

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[4] *Abdy,* Notes on, pp. 152 ff.

[5] *Baumann,* Usambara, p. 45.

[6] *Wohlrab,* Das Recht, p. 172.

[7] *Lang,* Die Waschambala, p. 221.

[8] *Damman,* Zur Geschichte der Digo, p. 61.

The chiefs of the Saramo were often not unwilling to make treaties, writes *Schmidt*,[9] when they promised to place themselves under German protection. Such a treaty might sometimes be sealed by a sort of document subscribed to by the parties, and of course there was also the exchange of gifts. But frequently the treaty was concluded with a festive ritual, and an important part of this was a sealing of the treaty by the contracting of blood-brotherhood. On such occasions *Schmidt* was generally represented by a proxy, the native interpreter of the expedition. On one occasion, however, *Schmidt* was obliged to go through the ritual of blood-brotherhood in person with a chief who ruled over an enclave in the Saramo region. The ceremony consisted in both making an incision in the upper arm and then sucking the blood from each other's wounds. *Schmidt,* who claims to have concluded about 25 similar treaties with chiefs among the Saramo, is of the opinion that one could not attach any very great importance to such treaties. But he thinks that in view of the chaotic conditions prevailing in Africa, they did constitute the only basis for an African law with the support of which the different nations could later extend their spheres of interest.

Krauss, who also gives an account of this custom among the same people, stresses above all the obligations entailed upon the contracting parties by this pact. In this case he is referring chiefly to the blood-brotherhood between two individuals. The actual rite consists in making an incision in the chest, after which the blood of the two "brothers" to be is smeared upon hen's liver. Each of the parties then eats a portion so that their bloods are exchanged. The one blood-brother is responsible for the actions of the other. In addition to this, they must in every way render each other support and aid in the ordinary course of life, and if one is killed it is incumbent upon the other to claim blood vengeance. If the blood-brother suspects that his partner has been poisoned, he must open the chest of the corpse and examine the heart and the liver. If these organs are coloured black, poisoning may be assumed as the cause of death, it is thought.

It should also be noted that, according to *Krauss,* among the Saramo women may also make such blood-bonds, though a married woman must first get her husband's permission.[1]

It is likewise from the Saramo, but also from the Zeguha and Sagara, that *Burton* gives an account of "Sáre or brother-oath". He remarks that it tends to reconcile conflicting interests between individuals, so softening the feuds and frictions of savage society. But it also serves—and this is its principal significance—to strengthen those needing the support of an ally. The ceremony takes different forms in different tribes, and is confined to adults of the male sex. Among the Saramo, the Zeguha and the Sagara, the two "brothers" sit with legs outstretched on a hide. They sit face to face and so that their legs overlap. Their bows and arrows are placed across their thighs. A third person flourishes a sword over their heads and pours out a stream of invective against anyone who may break the brotherhood. A sheep is then killed and its flesh, generally the heart, is roasted and brought to the contracting parties. The latter, having made incisions in each other's breasts "close to the pit of the stomach", eat a piece of the meat smeared with each other's blood.[2]

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[9] *Schmidt,* Deutschlands Kolonien, I, p. 29.

[1] *Krauss,* Volksmedizinische Beobachtungen, pp. 73 ff., *Id., KDGA* 49/1918.

But in another passage by the same writer, dealing with the Sagara, we find that we are concerned here not only, as appears from the above, with "a performance of the rite by way of inoculation", but that it is a matter of "a rite of blood-tasting". *Burton* says that he was visited by the sultan, who insisted upon making "sare" or brotherhood. The white traveller was represented by a proxy. The procedure is described thus. The two brothers-to-be seated themselves on the ground opposite each other, with their legs stretched out before them. A third man held a drawn sword over their heads while another addressed them alternately in a little homily in which they were threatened with death or slavery as the penalty for betraying their vows. Each of the parties then licked a little of the other's blood, which he took with his finger from a knife-cut just above the heart, or rather, remarks *Burton,* "where the heart is popularly supposed to be". The sultan then presented the proxy with a neat iron chain-anklet, as a souvenir or remembrance, and the latter in his turn made the sultan a present of a little cloth."[3]

Among the Zeguha, peace between villages is concluded by performing rites of blood-brotherhood. Two respected men are the contracting parties. A sword is held over their heads and lightly roasted goat's liver is smeared with the "heart's blood" of the two participants. This they have themselves produced by cutting their own persons. The liver is eaten and friendship is established.[4]

The French missionary *Baur,* who travelled among the Doe and the Zeguha, has given a rather detailed description of the blood-pact between the chief of the Zeguha and his proxy. He furthermore gives us a theory with regard to the origin of this custom: "Cette cérémonie de la fraternisation, à laquelle j'ambitionnais de me soumettre, mais qui, d'ailleurs, il me semble, n'a aucun caractère superstitieux, est universellement pratiquée dans ces pays et jouit d'une grande faveur auprès des indigènes. On la dit d'origine sémitique et en usage chez plusieurs tribus sauvages de l'Asie. Peut-être a-t-elle été introduite chez les fils de Cham par les Arabes païens qui fréquantaient cette côte bien avant l'apparition de Mohamet. Quoi qu'il en soit, elle est ici depuis très longtemps pratiquée entre des personnes qui veulent contracter une amitié étroite et solennelle. Si pourtant cette amitié vient à se rompre, une cérémonie nouvelle a lieu, car le sang échangé porterait malheur aux parjures. Comme le cérémonial de cet acte important peut n'être pas sans interêt, le voici:

Quand deux hommes veulent devenir "frères de sang," on commence par tuer une poule, et, après l'avoir plumée, on la partage en deux: le foie est mis à part . . . Cependant les deux parts de la volaille, ayant été separées, furent embrochées, dans un morceau de bois et rôties sur de la braise, ainsi que le foie. Bwambwara et Kingarou (the chief and the proxy) quittent alors leurs habits, le pagne exepté, se lavent, vont s'asseoir à terre, l'un plaçant une jambe sur celle de l'autre, et réciproquement. Une ficelle dont ils tiennent les bouts entre les dents, les unit

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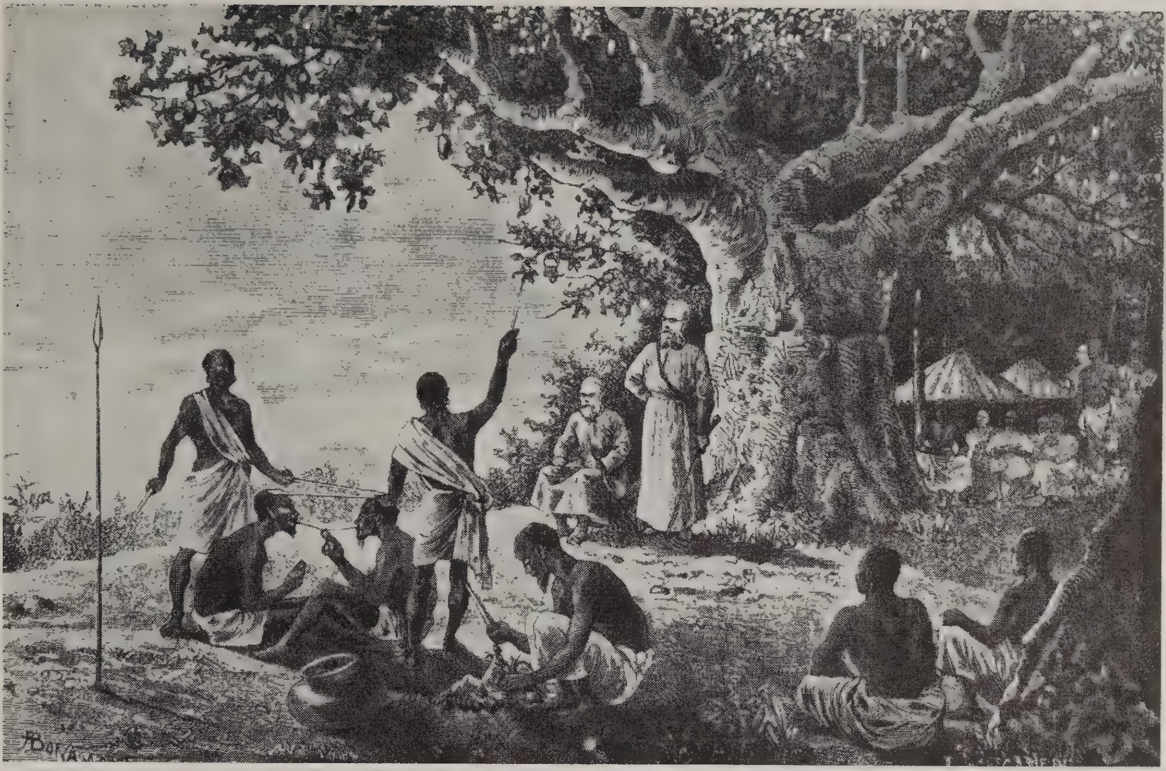
[2] *Burton,* The Lake Regions, p. 114.

[3] *Ib.,* p. 199; *Cole,* Notes on, p. 321.

[4] *Stuhlmann,* Mit Emin Pascha, pp. 24 f.



Blood-brotherhood, Zeguha and Doe (after Rev. Baur).

entr'eux, et chacun garde dans sa main droite la moitié du foie rôti de la volaille. Sur la tête des chefs, deux notables du villages tiennent d'une main un *zimé* (espèce de sabre) et de l'autre un couteau . . . Celui qui a tué la poule donne un coup de couteau sur la ficelle et la coupe en deux. Il fait ensuite trois ou quatre incisions dans la peau du creux de l'estomac des contractants de manière à ce que le sang coule, et il leur présente une poignée de sel. Ceux-ci en mettent un peu sur leurs incisions, imprègnent le foie rôti du sang qui coule et se presentent mutuellement le morceau de l'alliance, le *soga*. Les chefs le mangent et la cérémonie est faite: les voilà frères éternellement."[5]

This ceremony is of course accompanied by a lot of curses and self-imprecations. The parties pronounce execrations of vengeance on each other in case of either violating the sacred oath, praying, for instance, that the liver they have eaten may turn into poison for him who fails to keep the oath, etc. The ceremony is reproduced on this page where we can see the cord which the two prospective blood-brothers have between their mouths and the arrows on their heads. The two masters of ceremonies brandish the daggers during the imprecations and a third assistant kills the hen.

The Masai have rites of blood-brotherhood as an expression of friendship between both tribes and individuals. They should not, however, says *Merker,* be taken seriously, at least not in the latter case. *Merker* is of the opinion that we may therefore presume that we have here to do with a custom which is not native to the Masai.[6] *Hollis* goes so far as to declare that "formerly, when the Masai did not wish to make a solemn peace with the savages they entered into blood-brotherhood with them."[7] *Hollis* describes the ceremony in the following way: "A Masai elder would sit down with one of the elders of the savages: each of them would cut his left arm, and after dipping in the blood some meat of a bullock which was killed on the spot, would eat it." *Merker* gives a similar account, but adds that after the communion there was also an exchange of clothes between the contracting parties, and they did not give the garments back to each other until the following morning. On this occasion the parties perform a rather unpleasant ceremony resembling that among the Djaga, which was there said to precede the actual ceremony of blood-brotherhood.[8] This according to *Merker,* consists in each taking into his mouth from the mouth of the other a gulp of milk or pompe after the clothes have been returned.

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[5] *Baur,* Voyage dans l'Oudoe, pp. 381.

Blood-brotherhood between two tribes need not always be concluded through the chiefs, though this is of course the most usual procedure. There is also a ceremony called "the suckling of exchanged children," in which two women with suckling babies are allowed to conclude blood-brotherhood on behalf of their respective tribes. The two women, says *Merker,* exchange their children and each puts the other's child to her breast for a moment. They then take the children in the leather aprons on their backs and enter into blood-brotherhood with each other. One of the witnesses makes a few incisions in the belly-skin of the two women and then hands them a piece of the heart of an ox that has just been slaughtered. Each woman now wipes of some of the blood flowing from her belly and puts the meat in the other's mouth. Every such conclusion of peace entails the obligation to mutual hospitality.

Weiss gives an almost precisely similar account of blood-brotherhood ceremonies among the Masai but he emphasizes that when two women with children at the breast represent the tribes, the obligations of the brotherhood are taken in all seriousness.[9]

The Kwafi, a branch of the Masai, made blood-brotherhood with a traveller in these regions, as illustrated below.[1]

From another branch of the same people, the Lumbwa, a traveller reports that the people came in with offers of peace and blood-brotherhood was made with the chief. As an act symbolic of the fate of him who should first break the contract supposed to have been consecrated by the ceremony, two puppies were chopped in two.[2]

Another of the main tribes in what is called the Hamitic-Nilotic province is the Nandi. *Hollis* asserts that blood-brotherhood was formerly unknown to the Nandi, but the custom was introduced by all the coastal traders who passed through the country. In his account of the ceremony among the Nandi he says that a Suaheli and a Nandi would sit opposite each other, and after one of them had cut the back of his hand the wound would be sucked by the other. The Nandi, however, never considered this ceremony binding.[3] An English trader in this tract provides an example of this. He had made blood-brotherhood with a chief, and it is said that he was received with apparent friendship by his blood-brother. But the treacherous natives one night fell upon him and his caravan and he was killed.[4]

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[6] *Merker,* Die Masai, p. 101.

[7] *Hollis,* The Masai, p. 322.

[8] *Volkens,* Der Kilimandscharo, p. 157.

[9] *Weiss,* Die Völkerstämme, p. 364.

[1] *Neumann,* Elephant-Hunting, p. 128. Cf. *Kolb,* Von Mombasa durch Ukambani, p. 224.

[2] *Ravenstein,* Messrs. Jackson and Gegge's Journey, p. 197.

Regarding the origin of this custom among the Nandi, *Huntingford* states that they had two borrowed forms: one borrowed from the Masai and the other introduced by Suaheli traders.[5]

With regard to some other tribes in this province, *P. H. Gulliver,* who has recently spent some time there, has informed me that "there is nothing of blood-brotherhood in Turkana, nor, I may add, any of the Turkana-speaking group in Uganda, the Sudan, or Ethiopia (Karamajong, Ngijie, Dodoth, Taposa, Donyiro, Jiye) to the best of my knowledge. In Turkana the nearest thing to anything of that sort is a kind of semi-formal institution of what I am calling "best-friend" ('lopay' in Turkana). This is established between any two men between whom stock pass for any other than purely trade purposes, if those two men are not already related by ties of kinship or marriage. Where stock have once passed they are expected to pass again whenever one of the men is in need of assistance. Further, a channel is set up along with mutual help can flow of other kinds such as food, decorations, spears etc. The men do not normally live near together, for it is most useful to have a best-friend in parts of the country where one may be travelling and may need hospitality and help. Most best-friends do not meet more than once or twice in a year. I am told that a best-friend who abuses the tie by constantly begging more than he gives out, soon ceases to be a best-friend any longer. Just as the inception of the tie is informal so is the dissolution of it. The tie is only maintained at the convenience of each party. It is not symbolised by any kind of ceremony whatsoever." Dr. *Gulliver* also comments on an instance of blood-brotherhood reported by *Austin,* who said that he became blood-brother to a Turkana chief: "He does not explain what happened, nor even what he meant by a 'chief', since there were no such men before the British came. I suggest that Austin—like so many early travellers, unfortunately—was not at all clear as to what he was doing, but he wished to make what he hoped would be a pact with a local influential Turkana man, as he may have heard that some other tribes do."[6]

Blood-brotherhood, Kwafi (after A. Neumann).

If we now turn to the Hamitic Bantu tribes in the south, we have the following description of blood-brotherhood among the Issansu from *Kohl-Larsen.* An Issansu told him that he had become a blood-brother of a man from the Sukuma tribe. The blood-brotherhood was called *lusale*. When an Issansu wished to enter into such a bond, he had to go with his wife to the other man. The wife took a basket of meal, while the other man provided a goat. Each of the men who were to be blood-brothers had two witnesses. The goat was killed by the witnesses and they prepared it for eating in the house. When the meat was ready, a skin was laid outside the door and the two men seated themselves on it, facing one another, with the soles of their feet touching. The liver of the goat had been left uncooked and was laid beside the two men. The witnesses made a small cut in the chest of each man with a sharp stone, collected the blood on a leaf of the castor plant, and smeared the blood on the goat's liver, which was then eaten by the two men. The two witnesses then declared to the blood-brothers that if either deserted the other in need or danger, he would suffer misfortune or death as a consequence. The two blood-brothers then went into the house, where water had been boiled and one gave the other a bead-necklace which had been in the water. The Issansu brother returned home the next day, having received two goats as a parting gift from his new blood-brother. A month later the Sakuma man made a return visit. A goat was killed, water was boiled, and backs were washed. The bead-necklace was given back to the Sakuma man. The blood-brotherhood between them was then complete. It did not involve only them; each of the blood-brothers was brother to all the men of the other's clan. The wives were not permitted to be present during the ceremonies. *Kohl-Larsen* says that the bonds and obligations of the blood-brotherhood were very extensive. The two men were considered as real brothers, but they did not hold their wives in common.[7]

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[3] *Hollis,* The Nandi, p. 84.

[4] *Ansorge,* Under the African, p. 56.

[5] *Huntingford,* Miscellaneous Records, p. 438.

[6] *P. H. Gulliver* (Letter 10/1, 1950), *Austin,* With McDonald in Uganda, London 1903.

The same author also gives an account of a kind of "blood-brotherhood" among the Sandawe, but he states that no incision was made in the skin in this case. A goat was killed and eaten, and native beer was drunk. The "blood-friend" was called *ndogo,* a Suaheli term; since the Sandawe have not such a word in their language, and the ceremony was not so complicated as that among the Issansu which has been described above, *Kohl-Larsen* concludes that the custom was propably derived from foreign usage. The friends incurred a lot of obligations to one another. Each had to pay the other's debts if necessary, they had to help one another in need, and so on.[8]

Among the Gogo, blood-brotherhood was often used earlier to pledge mutual aid in war. The transfer of blood was accomplished by each drinking blood from the other's hand, which had been cut between the forefinger and thumb and on the palm. The ceremony was accompanied by the usual imprecations against breaking the pledge and by exchange of gifts. It is worthy of note that in this case marriage between children of blood-brothers was not forbidden, and blood-brothers had no right to each other's wives. The alliance implied obligations of hospitality and help at the death of a blood-brother.[9]

Beverley gives a variant of the ritual used by the Gogo, in which the blood of the opposite party was swallowed with the liver of a sacrificed animal—sheep, goat or chicken.[1]

Claus mentions that traders often made blood-brotherhood with prominent Gogo men. This was accomplished by each of them making a small cut in his tongue and moistening a piece of goat's liver with the blood from the wound, whereupon he gave the piece to the other to eat.[2]

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[7] *Kohl-Larsen,* Auf den Spuren, I, pp. 332 f.

[8] *Ib.,* II, pp. 37 f.

[9] *Paulsen,* Rechtsanschauungen der Wagogo, pp. 168 f.

[1] *Beverley,* Die Wagogo, p. 205.

The conclusion of blood-brotherhood among the Henge was according to *Thomson* regarded as the seal upon eternal friendship. He writes: "We sealed our friendship by making brothers with the chief's son. This ceremony is done by tasting each other's blood and vowing eternal friendship. Of course I did not take a personal part in this savage ceremony. Chuma acted as my proxy... Thereafter we fraternized on the best of terms, and proceeded on our way."[3]

Although, among the Henge, the parties to this ceremony drank directly of each other's blood, this was evidently not at all the case among the Hehe, according to the same author. He gives the following description of the performance of the rite establishing blood-brotherhood between himself and Mamlè, the king of the Hehe. "He (Mamlè) now wanted to make brother with me, so that I and all my men would be safe wherever they might be found; otherwise they might be killed." The following day, preceded by their band and escorted by their chief rifleman, Grant's party went to the chief's house where the ceremony was to be performed. Proxies were chosen on both sides, Chuma for Grant and the headman of Uhenge for Mamlè. The proxies sat down opposite each other with legs interlaced, while the spear of the one and the gun of the other were placed across the respective shoulders of each. A Mhehe then made three small cuts in the breast of Chuma, and Uledi my gun-bearer, made the same on the chief's breast, at which he visibly winced. Another Mhehe now took the axe of Malmè's proxy and rubbed it on the spear. At the same time he made a speech in which he called down curses on the latter if he should break the brotherhood by doing the other harm in any way, and swore that he should stand by his brother whenever he was in danger. He invoked the gods to turn the weapon of the traitor against himself and to see that he had no peace or welfare if he did not religiously adhere to all the requirements of the brotherhood. Uledi then took Chuma's knife and rubbed it on his gun, delivering a similar speech the while. To conclude the ceremony a small piece of meat was rubbed in Chuma's blood and given to the headman to eat, and Chuma was likewise served.[4]

In his monograph on the Hehe, *Nigmann* states that the Hehe were accustomed to conclude a pact of peace or non-aggression with a lesser tribe by a ceremony of blood-brotherhood. The other tribe would send emissaries and presents to the Hehe, and the head of the party entered into blood-brotherhood with the chief of the Hehe by a ceremony similar to that described above. Afterwards the others likewise became blood-brothers with Hehe men, in order of their rank, and the presents were delivered. After such a pact, the tribes were not only bound not to make war on one another, but also had to help one another if the occasion arose.

An interesting example is quoted by *Nigmann* from which we note that the Ngoni were acquainted with this pact of non-aggression. He mentions an instance where a Ngoni chief and a hundred followers came with presents of ivory and cattle to the Hehe who threatened to invade their country, and concluded blood-brotherhood with them.[5]

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[2] *Claus,* Die Wagogo, p. 37.

[3] *Thomson,* To the Central, p. 158; Chuma was "a caravan leader". He was a member of the Zanzibar guild of porters and he had long experience under Livingstone as an interpreter of the geographical questions etc. p. 31.

[4] *Thomson,* op. cit., pp. 243 f.

A variant of the ritual used by the Hehe is given by *Dempwolf*. He reports that a cut was made in the hand and the blood drunk by the brothers-to-be. This bond was considered to be a seal upon eternal friendship. The blood-brothers had rights of inheritance from each other.[6]

Among the Bena, who are closely related to the Hehe, a similar ceremony also occurs, as well as an inoculation. In his monograph on this tribe, *Culwick* gives an account of the procedure for the blood-pact. When two men swear blood-brotherhood, he writes, they "not only take the blood but also share the liver of a chicken and some ginger. Then each of them strikes a piece of iron or some iron implement held by a third person and sweares the oath of brotherhood." After two men have sworn blood-brotherhood the women who are forbidden to the one as his "sisters" become the "sisters" of the other party also.[7]

Concerning the ritual of blood-brotherhood and its significance among the Sango, a tribe living in a region adjacent to the Hehe, the missionary *Heese* tells us that this pact is reserved exclusively for brotherhood between an individual belonging to the tribe and a stranger. Blood-brotherhood is never concluded between two individuals belonging to the tribe. He gives the following account of the performance of the rite as practised by the Sango. A drop of blood is taken from the arm of each party about 7 cm from the elbow. These drops of blood are then added to a mug of beer, and the two parties then take alternate gulps of the beer until it is finished. *Heese* adds that the artificial relationship thus established of course entails certain mutual obligations for the individuals in question.[8]

A brotherhood concluded in this way is naturally invalidated, says *Heese,* on the death of one of the parties. But even without the decease of either, blood-brotherhood may be dissolved if the two parties to it give their consent. This, however, entails certain economic settlements. Since on the conclusion of the pact there has evidently been an exchange of presents, these must be returned if the relationship is to be dissolved. Either the gifts themselves must be returned, or the parties must compensate each other according to the approximate value of the gifts. If the one has given more than the other, compensation for the additional value must also be made.

Among the Nyamwezi blood-brotherhood was entered into, according to *Grant,* in the following manner. "Several of our men made brotherhood with the Wezees, and the process between Bombay and the sultan's son, Keerenga, may be mentioned. My consent having been given, a mat is spread, and a confidential party of surgeons attends on each." All four now squatted as if for a game of whist. Before them were two clean leaves, a little grease and a spear-head. A cut was then made in the left side of each party, just under the ribs. A drop of blood from the cuts was put on a leaf and exchanged by the surgeons. The latter now rubbed the blood with butter twice into the wound with the leaf, which was torn into pieces and strewn over the "brothers" heads. A solemn address was made by the older of the attendants, and they concluded the ceremony by rubbing their own sides with butter, shaking hands and wishing each other success. Ten rounds of ammunition were then fired, "a compliment from each of the four drums" was sounded, and the parties to the ceremony paraded the village all the afternoon.[9]

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[5] *Nigmann,* Die Wahehe, pp. 106.

[6] *Dempwolf,* Beiträge, pp. 104 f.

[7] *Culwick,* Ubena of the Rivers, pp. 381, 300.

[8] *Heese,* Sitte und Brauch, p. 141.

Burton states that the incision may also be made above the knees of the parties. "Among the Wanyamwezi and the Wajiji the cut is made below the left ribs or above the knee; each man receives in a leaf his brother's blood, which, mixed with oil or butter, he rubs into his own wound. An exchange of small presents generally concludes the rite. It is a strong tie, as all men believe that death or slavery would follow its infraction. The Arabs, to whom the tasting of blood is unlawful, usually perform it by proxy. The slave 'Fundi' or 'fattori' of the caravans become brothers, even with the Washenzi, whenever they expect an opportunity of utilizing the relationship."[1]

The missionary *Stern,* who was a member of the Nyamwezi Mission, gives the following account of the conclusion of blood-brotherhood among the Nyanyembe at Urambo. The rite was called *kunuana.* Each of the parties brought his own second, a knife and a leaf of the Mluba-tree. They sat down with crossed legs. The seconds took the knife and cut the leg of the opposite party above the knee. The resulting blood was mixed with some animal fat on the leaf. The friends then exchanged the blood and rubbed the mixture into each other's wounds. The remainder was rubbed on their heads. Each was now *mnuano,* blood-friend, of the other.[2]

The same tribe also had a ceremony for the official dissolution of the blood-pact. We have the following account of the ritual. The woman chief had to dissolve the bond she had entered into with her husband. She killed a goat, and the flow of its blood symbolised the draining of her blood from the body of her husband. He also killed a goat with the same effect.[3]

Burton relates that his caravan-leader, the Arab Said bin Salim, had to go through the ceremony of blood-brotherhood with two Djidji sub-chiefs in order to avoid war-like complications: "Lurinda, the head-man of Gungu, had often begged the Arab to enter into 'blood-brotherhood' with him, and this had Said bin Salim pertinaciously refused, on religious grounds, to do. When informed that battle and murder were in the wind, he at once made fraternity with Lurinda, hoping to derive protection from his spear. His terrors afterwards persuaded him to do the same with Kannena, head-man of Kawele."[4]

According to reports received by *Kohler* from an official named Puder in the Nyamwezi region, blood-brotherhood there involved scratching the arm or the hand until the blood came. The method of inoculation differed somewhat from those previously mentioned, the blood in this case being mixed with *pombe* (African beer) and drunk by the two participants. *Kohler* also states that the blood-brotherhood entered into does not mean that the parties enjoy a common right to women and children.

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[9] *Grant,* A Walk across, pp. 108 f.

[1] *Burton,* The Lake Regions, pp. 114 ff., *Id.,* GSJ 29/1859, pp. 89 f.

[2] *Stern,* Deutsch-Ostafrika, pp. 322 ff.

[3] *Kaiser-Reichard,* Die Ostafrikanische Expedition, pp. 269 f.

[4] *Burton,* op. cit. pp. 125 f.

Blood-brotherhood between tribes and groups occurs in this region.[5]

Speke tells of a stay in the Nyamwezi region, where the sultan of Msalala was so delighted at receiving presents from him that "he considered the exchange of hongo a bond of alliance, and proclaimed that we were henceforth to be brothers." Whether any exchange of blood took place, however, *Speke* does not say.[6]

On one of his journeys, *Stanley* stayed among the Sumbwa, a dependent tribe of the Nyamwezi, and in his book "Through the Dark Continent" he has given a lively description of his meeting with Mirambo, the mighty potentate, by whom he was much impressed, and with whom he entered what he calls "strong friendship'. "His person quite captivated me, for he was a thorough African gentleman in appearance, very different from my conception of the terrible bandit who had struck his telling blows at native chiefs and Arabs with all the rapidity of a Frederick the Great environed by foes."

Stanley was naturally desirous of making an alliance with this dangerous potentate in the same way that he "made strong friendship with Mtesa, Rumanika and all the kings along the road from Usoga to Unyamwezi."

The ceremony he went through to conclude brotherhood with the mighty warrior-king has been described by *Stanley* as follows. In this case, of course, he could not, as on so many other occasions, allow any "proxy" to open his veins in his place; he was obliged himself to go through the process. Manwa Sera, *Stanley's* chief captain, was on this occasion the master of ceremonies. "Manwa Sera was requested to seal our friendship by performing the ceremony of blood-brotherhood between Mirambo and myself. Having caused us to sit fronting each other on a straw carpet, he made an incision in each of our right legs, from which he extracted blood, and, interchanging it, he exclaimed aloud: If either of you break this brotherhood now established between you, may the lion devour him, the serpent poison him, bitterness be in his food, his friends desert him, his gun burst in his hands and wound him, and everything that is bad do wrong to him until death."[7]

The same blood was now considered to flow in *Stanley's* and Mirambo's veins. They were friends and brothers "in a sacred covenant for life." The two "brothers" then naturally exchanged a number of gifts.

As may be seen from the above description, in the performance of this act among the Sumbwa there appears to have been no drinking of blood, nor does there seem to have been any inoculation of any kind. The two contracting parties seem only to have mixed the blood in their veins.

From the Nyamwezi tribe Gala, however, *Böhm* gives an account of the procedure when he made a blood-pact with the king of Gala, Liowa. From this it appears that after the incision a hen's liver was dipped in the blood of each, and this the parties were apparently to consume. Throughout the ceremony, remarks *Böhm,* two broad-bladed spears were suspended over the heads of the contracting parties.[8]

The same author provides an instance from the Fipa. It is said that the son of the

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[5] *Kohler,* Rechte der deut. Schutzgeb., p. 41.

[6] *Speke,* What led to the Discovery, p. 286; Cf. *Desoignies,* Die Msalala, p. 270: "Wie die anderen Völker Äquatorialafrikas schliessen auch die Bana Msalala Blutsfreundschaftsbündnisse."

[7] *Stanley,* Through the Dark Continent, pp. 492 ff.

[8] *Böhm,* Von Zanzibar, p. 87; Cf. *Böhm-Kaiser,* Bericht, pp. 192 f., 263.

Fipa chief and the servant of the traveller acted as proxies in the rite of blood-friendship.[9]

When *Jérome Becker* was staying with the Nyanyembe (in Tabora), two of his followers, or rather, two of his servants, went through the ceremony of blood-brotherhood. The procedure was as follows. An incision was made in the breast of each party, after which some drops of blood were collected on a leaf. The subsequent ritual we have already met with in *Grant's* description. The blood on the leaf was thus emptied over the heads of the blood-brothers. It also happened, however, says *Becker,* that the parties went so far as even to drink the blood.[1]

An interesting detail, from the sociological point of view, is communicated by the same writer, who stresses that the "brotherhood" did not by any means necessarily imply social equality as a result, for the elder of the contracting parties enjoyed complete social supremacy over his blood-brother. We shall revert to this circumstance in a later section, when discussing the matter of the sociological import of blood-brotherhood and the purposes served by the contract.

In his great monograph on the Nyamwezi the Catholic missionary *Bösch* has described "le pacte du sang = *kunwana.*" *Bösch* was stationed under the apostolic vicarship in Tabora, and his information probably refers chiefly to the Nyanyembe, Bilwana and to some extent also the Sumbwa. *Bösch's* statement is of interest as giving information not only about the incision and the communion in connection with the contracting of blood-brotherhood, but other interesting details as well. He tells us that the two contracting parties also marked their respective weapons and implements with the blood. When two individuals have resolved to conclude this pact, he says, they summon the elders to act as witnesses. Before these witnesses they then declare their intention of entering into blood-brotherhood and in their presence they go through all the required rites. Each makes some slight incision in the other's arm, thigh and belly. This done, one of the contracting parties takes a small piece of meat, or else a little ball of *bugali,* and wiping it on the wounds inflicted, he smears it with the blood of each. He then divides it into two, eating one half himself and giving the other to his friend. In this way they each partake of the blood of the other. This communion having been consummated, each takes some of his own blood and applies it to the wounds of his friend. They then mark their weapons with the blood: bow, arrows, spear, axe, club.

Next, still in the presence of the witnesses, they offer each other gifts, the one gives to the other one or two cattle.

The two blood-brothers show their mutual helpfulness in symbolic acts. After this their wives and children are owned in common, at least nominally. *Bösch* denies, however, that they have the right to enjoy each other's wives on the sexual plane. It must not be imagine he says, that the two friends actually make a mutual concession of their marital rights; the titles conferred are purely honorary. If one of the friends were to happen to have relations with the other's wife, this would be enough to lead to the rupture of the pact.[2]

On the death of a blood-brother the survivor must take care of the family of the deceased. He may marry the widow, but only in accordance with the usual formalities.

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[9] *Böhm-Reichard,* Bericht, p. 17.

[1] *Becker,* La vie en Afrique, I, p. 232.

[2] *Bösch,* Les Banyanwezi, pp. 437 ff.

In case of sickness, the blood-brothers must help one another, and if one of them is murdered his death must be revenged.

The blood-pact may, however, be dissolved before the death of either of the 'brothers'. This is the case, for example, if one of the parties wishes to marry a relative of the other. Furthermore, one who is unfaithful to his blood-brother may be excluded from the pact. When this rupture is decided upon, the elders are summoned once more. The one of the friends who believes himself to have been wronged makes a declaration: "My friend has not been true to his engagements, I desire to break the pact that we have made!" The elders judge the case; the unfaithful friend, if condemned, retires, covered with confusion.

When one of the parties dies, declares *Bösch,* the other ought, strictly speaking, to follow him into death. The surviving blood-brother should thus seek an expedient means of making 'his own departure' from the scene. Frequently, however, not to say always, he does not do so: the survivor finds the means of remaining on the scene.[3]

Sukuma friends often became blood-brothers. The ceremony took place under the supervision of a witch-doctor, each of the men sucking the blood of the other from a cut in the arm.[4]

Two of the most prominent of the Sindja are said to have become blood-brothers of missionaries, though nothing further is mentioned about the ceremony.[5]

Eugène Hurel, writing in 1911, says that the blood-pact had lost ground among the Kerewe on Lake Victoria. But it did still occur then, and was concluded according to the following ritual. The day and place for the rendezvous was fixed in advance, and a group of relatives and friends summoned as witnesses. The two men sat on a mat facing each other. They uncovered their torsos, and with a small knife made a slight wound on their respective left breasts, sometimes also in the groin. They collected some drops of the blood, which they mixed with a little ball of bwita or with a little milk. The mixtures were exchanged and swallowed. They then rose and, leaving their witnesses, they entered a hut in which on of them had his bed, and lay down side by side. They swore to afford each other help and support, and so on. After this there were certain festivities. *Hurel* states that there was no doubt that the pact created a real relationship. Neither of the blood-brothers might take a wife among the "sisters" of the other.[6]

The Haja are a people comprising several smaller groups, and divided into eight sultanates. Among them, according to *Sundkler,* blood-brotherhood is one of the strongest social ties that exist. The procedure here is that a third person makes a cut in the navel of each of the contracting parties, takes a coffe-bean and breaks it into its two halves. These are moistened with blood from the wounds of the two men, and each of them eats up his half. The two parties hereby bind themselves to unwavering mutual help, and regard each other as brothers of the same blood. One consequence of this custom is that the blood-brothers consider themselves entitled to have sexual intercourse with each other's wives.[7] *Cory* and *Hartnoll* state that a blood-brother may marry the widow of his blood-brother, though he is not allowed to marry a sister of the same. If one of the parties to a blood-brotherhood wishes to marry a distant relative of his blood-brother he must go through a ceremony called *kwita omukago* with the relative in question, and this dissolves the prohibition. The descendants of blood-brothers generally do not marry each other "until the third generation inclusive." If a man dies suddenly and his relatives are not near at hand, the village headman will immediately appoint a blood-brother of the deceased to bury him and to look after his property until relatives arrive. If no paternal relatives exist, a blood-brother may be appointed as administrator of the property. A blood-brother may supervise the moral conduct of his brother's wife; if the occasion arises, he may collect evidence of her adultery.[8]

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[3] *Bösch,* op. cit., p. 440.

[4] *Werther,* Zum Victoria-Nyanza, p. 180.

[5] *van Thiel,* Businza unter der Dynastie der Bahinda, p. 513.

[6] *Hurel,* Religion, p. 286.

Whether there is any exchange of gifts in connection with the ceremony described above is not mentioned by *Sundkler,* but such is the case among one of the Haya groups, the Karagwe. According to *Cory* and *Hartnoll,* the gift may even be such a fine and, in these tracts, rare present as cattle. A gift of cattle is very rare, say these writers, though "on the occasion of the ceremony of blood-brotherhood a cow may be given by one of the blood-brothers to the other." Such a present must be made before witnesses, in this case the donor's children and other relatives. The handing over of the cattle is "a very solemn occasion, and is accompanied by a beer-drink, the participants of which are also witnesses to the gift."[9]

Among the Ziba, another of the Haya groups, blood-brotherhood was very common; *Authenrieth* says that it was impossible to find anyone who had not contracted it. He gives a detailed account of the ceremony and preparations. This involved a probation period during which each man made sure that the other had "a fine soul". The proposer came to the other during the night, accompanied by relatives, other blood-brothers and prominent people. The two principal parties sat on a hide facing each other, a coffee-bean was split and the halves moistened with a drop of their blood, drawn from a cut on the navel. They then ate each other's half-bean, and the ceremony concluded with promises and gifts. Blood-brothers had no right to each other's property, wife or children, and no rights of inheritance. Women and members of the same group could not become blood-brothers.[1]

Rehse, however, tell us that women among the Ziba could become blood-friends, although he does say that it was seldom they did so. He adds that it was considered that a man should not become blood-brother to a woman, since she was not thought to be capable of abiding by the law of blood-brotherhood. He knew of only one case of blood-brotherhood between a father and daughter. *Rehse's* account of the ceremony agrees with that of *Authenrieth* in the main. He stresses that the tie involved mutual aid, and, if necessary, revenge for the other's death. Only two persons may contract blood-brotherhood at the same time, but a person may become blood-brother to several persons on different occasions.[2]

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[7] *Sundkler,* Ung kyrka, pp. 72 f.

[8] *Cory-Hartnoll,* Customary Law, pp. 90 f., 42, 95, 103.

[9] Ib. p. 171; Rev. *Benettsson,* a Swedish missionary at present working among the Haja, informs me that the custom seems not to have died out yet in his district. He says that one of the native teachers at the mission told him that he had several blood-brothers. (Letter 6/7, 1951.)

[1] *Authenrieth,* Recht der Kissibaleute, pp. 374 f; *Kohler,* ZFR 15, p. 40;*Richte,* MDS 12, p. 88; *Herrmann,* MDS 7, p. 52.

The practice of exchanging blood was rather common among the Rundi. Small cuts were made in the chest of each brother-to-be, and the blood collected on a ripe banana which had been cut in two. Each man then ate the piece of banana with the other's blood on it. A man who betrayed a blood-brother would be killed immediately by an evil spirit.[3]

The blood-pact existed in the whole of the Ruanda country. The procedure was generally as follows. The contracting parties, with witnesses, sat down in the hut of one of them. The witnesses had with them a leaf in which sorgho-meal was placed. An incision was then made over the navel, the blood squeezed out, and mixed with the meal. The future blood-brothers consumed the mixture. There was a generous flow of admonitions and imprecations, after which the two blood-brothers lay down on a mat beside each in order to show that they were indissolubly united in times of prosperity and misfortune alike. The brothers distributed gifts.[4] *Chekanowski* states that the blood was mixed with beer from millet or from the banana, but he adds that it was sometimes mixed with milk instead.[5] With reference to these ingredients, *Chekanowski* attempts to establish a connection between this custom and certain circumstances relating to social class, an argument which we will come back to later on.

The same writer points out that in these tracts blood-brotherhood has lost much of its significance, and he thinks this is connected with the decadence of the clan organization. The following Ruanda proverb bears witness to the 'reliability' of blood-brotherhood here: *umwuzulu uluta umunywano,* meaning "Friendship is better than blood-brotherhood." Concerning the right to share in the ownership of the blood-brother's property, it is stated in the first place that it is total,[6] but that sexual intercourse with the wife of a man's blood-brother is according to some reports regarded as a great insult. According to other reports, however, the women are supposed to be at the disposal of the visiting blood-brother.[7]

Johanssen points out that the blood-brotherhood in Ruanda may often refer to entire tribes, and not only to individuals. The same author gives interesting information about a symbolic blood-pact which takes place in connection with the entry of novices into the great cult-society concentrated about the hero Ryangombe in the so-called Mandwa cult. The blood-pact is concluded between the man playing Ryangombe's rôle and the novice.[8]

Ramsay, leader of a German expedition to the Ruanda, suggested to their chief that they should show the sincerity of their friendship by becoming blood-brothers. The chief replied that it was only common people who cut their hands and drank one another's blood for such purposes, and he proposed that as he was a king and Ramsay the envoy of a great king, they should establish their mutual friendship in another manner, suited to persons of their rank. A Tussi acted as master of ceremonies, and came forward with some long strands of silky grass. Ramsay had to bind a cord of this grass around the chief's waist, and the chief did the same to Ramsay; they then shook hands vigorously, and the friendship between them was established.[9]

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[2] *Rehse,* Kiziba, p. 97; The deep significance attached to blood-brotherhood among the Ziba is indicated by the frequent allusions to it in their folk-tales, pp. 332, 346, 354 f., 381, 387.

[3] *Delhaise,* Chez les Warundi, p. 391.

[4] *Van Hove,* Essai de droit, p. 17.

[5] *Czekanowski,* Forschungen, I, pp. 243 f.

[6] *Van Hove, op. cit. p. 17.*

[7] *Czekanowski,* op. cit. p. 245.

[8] *Johanssen,* Geistesleben, pp. 90 f.; *Andersson,* Religion och magi, p. 161, *Briem,* Mysterier, p. 77.

Let us now turn to the Chiga (Ciga), who live in the mountainous highlands of western Ganda, just north of Ruanda. As regards blood-brotherhood among them, *Margaret Mead* writes: "The own group is essentially unreliable and likely to turn hostile, and the individual is forced to transfer the ties developed within the own group regarded as enemies. Thus the sense of security is outraged at two points: the original ties prove unreliable and the greatest security must be sought in a formerly distrusted spot."[1] *M. M. Edel* studied this tribe, and the following is what she has to say about the institution of blood-brotherhood:[2]

"Relationships between members of different clans are not necessarily warlike. Certain interclan institutions guarantee this. One is the pact of ritual blood brotherhood. In this two individuals take an oath of mutual protection, swallowing a small amount of each other's blood. It is believed that this blood will swell up and kill anyone who breaks such an oath. This relationship is considered closer and more trustworthy than actual brotherhood. This makes it possible for a man to travel in strange territory with a certain amount of safety, and it assures him of a friendly, hospitable, and cooperative trade friend. The choice of a pact brother lies with the individual and is not determined by existing clan alliances. Whatever trade there is is carried on through pact brothers. Markets have always existed, but until very recently they were rare and unfrequented, because in the absence of any peaceful policing authority they were places of danger.

The institution of the pact brother is important even today in connection with the interclan bonds set up by marriages. Clans are exogamous, and the complicated marriage negotiations require a go-between. Affinal ties, however, do not bind two clans together, but only the two families concerned. The preferred marriage is that of a man with a girl from his mother's clan, but this actually happens in only a small proportion of cases. For the most part choice is dictated by other considerations, such as ownership of cattle, or personal friendship between individuals of the two families. The kin of the wife expect the young husband to fulfil certain obligations of respect for her parents. He may talk to his sisters-in-law, and even tease them, as they are potential mates. The extension of these attitudes beyond the bride's own family is very slight. A woman coming to dwell permanently among her husband's kin has more widely ramifying obligations, but it is toward the actual parents and brothers of her husband that they are most sharply defined. Even the ties between a woman's children and her own relatives are of a familial rather than a clan nature."

From Nkole come several versions of

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[9] *Ramsay,* Ueber seine Expedition, pp. 314 f.

[1] *Mead,* Cooperation and competition, p. 490.

[2] *Edel,* The Bachiga of East Africa, pp. 128.

blood-brotherhood, *omukago,* and the manner of entering it. *Williams* points out that the ceremonies among the agricultural Bantu diverge in certain details from those among the cattle-rearing East Hamites, but he considers that these details are of negligible importance. "It will therefore only be necessary to describe the one ceremony, pointing out at the same time where the other differs. As the Bahima consider themselves the superior race and that what they do and say is the original, while the Bairu merely imitate them, I have thought it best to describe the Bahima rite in detail."[3] Of course, members of the same clan cannot enter into a blood-brotherhood, and it should be noticed that the blood-brotherhood between individuals places the members of the respective clans in the same relation of brotherhood. It is therefore a rite not to be entered upon without due thought and advice from the man's elders and relatives. If a man makes *omukago* with another, this bond lasts in theory for ever, but in practice the clans with which *omukago* has been made are usually forgotten after about two generations. Or, as one informant told *Williams,* it must be renewed and kept fresh by performing the ceremony anew.

The blood-bond cannot be made with a woman or between women. As the clan's continuance is through men, the clan's structure would be upset if this was allowed. In theory a man may not marry into the clan of his blood-brother, as this would be the equivalent of incest. In practice, however, this rule is relaxed and a man may marry into his blood-brother's clan provided the girl was not in any way related to the immediate family; for instance, he could not marry his blood-brother's sister or daughter. Although the whole clan is involved when a man makes *omukago,* the final decision as to the expediency of the step is always left to the father of the man. Among the Hima the first move is customarily made by the father, who tells his son that he should make blood-brotherhood with such a one. If the son were to refuse for any reason he would usually be disinherited by the father. The more enlightened Hima, however, are nowadays tending to follow the customs of the agricultural Bantu, whereby the son may make arrangements with another to make *omukago* and tell his father that he wishes to do so. The clan would be consulted, and if there is no objection, arrangements would be made. If the initiative is taken by the man himself and he wishes to make blood-brotherhood with his friend, the one who first asked has to visit the parents of the other to be approved. These visits would continue for a week before the ceremony could take place; the ceremony being performed in the same house.

There are a lot of preliminaries before the actual ceremony. On the night before, beer and loads of food are brought to the house. Feasting, dancing and recitations take place, and so on. The two participants in the ceremony of *omukago* must sleep together on the same bed. They must be woken up at dawn by a sister of the one in whose house they are. There must be no talking on awakening until the ceremony takes place; this occurs in the house, on a new mat especially provided. A friend of the one in whose house they are acts as master of ceremonies. The father and mother, and possibly one or two other members of the father's clan, are present, but none of the ousider's clan. If a friend is not available, the father can do the duties.

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[3] *Williams,* Blood-brotherhood in Ankole, p. 34.

The two brothers-to-be sit on the mat opposite each other, so close that their legs overlap. They have a grass-shoot in their right hands. The friend makes a small cut, usually on the right of the navel, on each man. This is done with the sharp head of the arrow used for shooting into the vein of a cow when it is bled for food. The agriculturists here use a small razor. The ends of the grass-shoot are dipped in the blood from the incision and returned to the hand. A little milk is poured on the blood in the hand. The Bantu put on a little flour and then pour water on it. Each man then holds the other's hand with his left, and together, both swallow the blood and milk, or blood and flour and water. Certain symbolic actions are then performed; shaving of the partner's hair, cutting his finger-nails, etc. Meanwhile, some sentences are recited. Each blood-brother makes a present to the other.

The obligations involved in the making of blood-brotherhood are those of a true friend, *William* says. It is thus the duty of each blood-brother to help the other. They are expected to give each other lodging and to look after the family or cattle when required. It is customary for a man to place his wife at the disposal of a blood-brother, if he comes on a visit. In former days the blood-brotherhood was useful in time of raids, as there was always someone near at hand to help. If a man's blood-brother was killed it was the survivor's duty to hunt out and kill the murderer. *Williams* points out that there are very real advantages in blood-brotherhood even to day. If a man was to be arrested his blood-brothers could warn him. But there ore other advantages, for the traveller, the trader, the visitor, of having blood-brothers in differents parts. "He has a home that he can go to when he takes his cattle to sell down-country, when he goes to find his tax by working as a porter outside his home country, when he takes his goats or salt or tobacco or grain to trade."[4]

Two blood-brothers may insult each other jokingly, even in public, and would think nothing of it. This is interesting, as it shows that the blood-brotherhood is certainly connected with the joking relationship, which we will discuss in the last chapter.

Williams later modifies his statement that *omukago* cannot be made with a woman or between women, saying that this is only true in so far as a boy cannot make *omukago* with a girl because he likes her. If, however, a father wishes his son to make blood-brotherhood with another family, and there is no boy in the family but only a girl, her father will make her represent the family by performing the ceremony. It sometimes occurs later that a boy and a girl marry when they are 'blood-brothers' in this way.

Another statement worth noticing is that a Hima cannot make blood-brotherhood with another Hima before first making it with a Bantu cultivator. This applies to the Mpororo, but is not general among the Nkole.[5]

There are a few instances of blood-brotherhood contracted by the Nkole with Europeans. In one case, the European was *Stanley*, when he visited the Nkole. *Stanley* describes the boy with whom he made Blood-brotherhood as "Uchunku, the Prince Royal of Ankole." The blood-letting was done by a boy of *Stanley's* and the ceremony is described as follows: "The rite of blood-brotherhood began with the laying of a Persian carpet, upon which the Prince and I took our seats cross-legged, with left hands clasped across the knees. The Professors of the Art advanced, and made an incision in each left arm and then each Professor took a small portion of butter, and two leaflets, which served as platters, mixed it with our blood, and then exchanging the leaves, our foreheads were rubbed with the mixture. The ceremony was thus relieved of the repulsiveness which accompanies it when performed among the Congo tribes. The Prince, who was now my young brother, took me by the hand into my hut to smile and to look pleased."[6]

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[4] *Williams*, op. cit. p. 38.

[5] *Ib.* p. 252.

It is noticeable that no blood was drunk: *Stanley* expresses pleasure that the ceremony was thus relieved of its repulsiveness. *Williams* comments on this that "there is no doubt however that the ceremony was not binding and that the Banyankole never looked on it as binding. They were prepared to make Omukago in the ordinary way... The needs of the moment were no doubt satisfied with the ceremony as performed, but the Banyankole distrusted a man who never completed the ceremony and would not have been surprised to see him return later to devastate their country."[7]

Another European who made such a pact was *Lugard,* who entered it with an uncle of king Ntare, and carried it out in the correct way. He says: "I made a very formal ceremony... I greatly pleased them by consenting to go through the full ceremony according to their own rites, and I founded upon our mutual pledges the treaty which I submitted to England."[8] *Williams* points out "Lugard is remembered as having kept his pact in *Omukago.*"[9]

Roscoe gives two versions of the ceremony of blood-brotherhood as practised among the Nkole, and at least one of these differs considerably from those which have already been mentioned. According to one version, blood-brotherhood was made by pouring a little milk into the palm of the hand and dropping into it one or two drops of blood taken from the pit of the stomach.[1]

The other version describes the ceremony thus: "they spread a rug on which they sit a little distance apart facing each other... On the rug between the two men is laid the arrow which is used for bleeding the cows, a coffee berry in its husk, and a twig of the sacred tree kirikiti. The host takes the arrow, scratches his stomach until he draws blood and passes the arrow to his guest, who does the same, and each catches a few drops of blood in his right hand. The coffee berry is divided, and each takes half and places it in the palm of his hand smearing it over with the blood. The host takes hold of the guest's right hand and with his lips takes the half berry from the palm and swallows it, the guest repeating the process with the other half berry."[2]

Then follow certain symbolic actions similar to those described by *Williams* and those connected with the oath of fidelity.

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[6] *Stanley,* In Darkest Africa, II, p. 349.

[7] *Williams,* op. cit. pp. 40 f.

[8] *Lugard,* The Rise of, p. 160.

[9] *Williams,* op. cit. p. 41.

[1] *Roscoe,* The Bahima: a Cow Tribe, p. 117.

[2] *Id.,* The Soul of central Africa, pp. 72 f.; Cf. *Meldon,* JAS 1907 p. 247.

Regarding the two versions, it will be noticed that we here again meet with the fact, already pointed out by *Williams,* that the ceremonies among the agricultural Bantu diverge in certain details from those among the cattle-rearing East Hamites.

We have already met the coffee-bean as a feature of the blood-pact among the Haja and the Nkole, and we shall see that it figures in the ceremony as practised by several tribes in the interlacustrine region.

Amongst the Toro, *Fisher* reports that each of the two parties took a coffee-bean, dipped it in the blood from a small incision made in the body and then handed it to the companion to be eaten. Whoever the king chose to honour with blood-brotherhood was raised to the highest position, regardless of his birth or estate.[3] When two English travellars visited this tribe, the chief asked them if they wanted to buy any ivory. However, he was not prepared to sell any larger quantities unless they entered into blood-brotherhood with him. The travellers agreed, and the ceremony took place with the headman as proxy (see the picture below). The mode of procedure was as follows: The headman sat down opposite the native's representative, each party having a sponsor, while the eldest of the natives constituted himself master of the ceremonies. Two small pieces of meat were procured, and each sponsor held one in his hand; the master of the ceremonies then explained that they were to become blood-brothers of the chief, and evoked a series of curses on either party that might not be true to the pledge. He then made a slight incision on each of the parties' chest. The blood that flowed from the cut having been smeared on the two pieces of raw meat, each party had to devour the pieces smeared with the blood of the other. A loaded gun had been placed between them, and when the ceremony was complete this was fired into the air; while the chief and his attendants fired another volley. Finally the travellers "called the chief up and taught him to shake hands, saying that it was the Englishmen's method of making blood-brotherhood; and that now we had performed the rites of both people, the Wanyabinga and the Englishmen, there could be no possibility of the compact ever being broken."[4]

The practice of exchanging blood was common among the Ganda. There are a lot of instances mentioned by travellers and investigators in this region. *Lucy Mair* quotes a full and variously significant description of the ceremony and the social implications of this practice: "A step which was taken by every father who could provide for his son's future was to arrange for him to make blood-brotherhood with some friend. The compact by which this relationship was set up involved an unlimited obligation of mutual aid, and every man made such a bond with at least two or three, sometimes as many as six, different people. Once he had attained to adult independence he made the arrangement for himself; but his first blood-brother, or *mukago,* was found for him by his father. In every case the ceremony was performed in the home of the father or of a senior relative, because it involved a partial assimilation of the blood-brother to membership of the clan.

The father would offer to give his son as *mukago* to a friend of his own, possibly a neighbour, possibly å stranger from another village, or he might further cement the relationship with a *mukago* of his own by suggesting that the compact should be made between their sons. The offer, implying as it did considerable confidence in the person to whom it was made, was regarded as a compliment.

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[3] *Fisher,* On the borders of Pigmy Land, p. 88; *Id.,* Western Uganda, p. 58.

[4] *Grogan-Sharp,* From the Cape to Cairo, p. 175.

In the actual ceremony the two parties sat side by side on a barkcloth, each with a woman to represent his wife; when a grown man made the compact his actual wife would be there. The father brought them coffee-berries. In each coffee-berry there are two beans; each partner opened one berry, made a cut in his body, rubbed both beans in the blood, swallowed one himself and gave the other to his partner. It was the physical act of swallowing the bean with the partner's blood on it that created the relationship; and it is vaguely conceived as remaining permanently in the stomach, where it was liable to swell up and kill a person who broke the compact. Any attempt to avoid such consequences by not swallowing the bean was equally supposed to be visited by rapid death—again thought to be caused by the bean itself which, in this case, swelled up in the mouth. Each partner then took a spear and knife and put them behind him to indicate that he would protect his friend from violence. A feast, cooked by the mother, was then eaten by as many relatives as could be collected. The feast was called *kwalula mukago,* the verb being the same as is used for the ceremony of admitting a child to the clan.

This ceremony could not make the blood-brother a full member of the clan, since he did not cease to belong to his own clan, but his status was in a certain degree assimilated to membership. He respected his blood-brother's totem as well as his own, was prohibited from marriage with women of his clan, was referred to by other members of the clan by the same kinship terms as his partner, and at ceremonies in his partner's clan he played the same part as a real relative of the same degree. Each was introduced to as many of the other's relatives as possible. The relationship was inherited, and, though the custom is now obsolete, people still respect the relationships created by such a tie between their ancestors, though they cannot always trace it back to the original compact.

The value of such a relationship was that it provided security against all possible risks, including those resulting from the commission of a crime. A blood-brother could refuse a man no request of any kind, from a drink of beer or safe keeping for his cattle to a wife, the payment of a heavy fine or debt, or the concealment of a fugitive from justice. The relationship took precedence of kinship, in that a murderer might count on finding refuge with a blood-brother even if the latter was a relative of his victim, and one informant said that the blood-brother might even give himself up to be killed in the place of his friend.

It was particularly advantageous to have blood-brothers in distant villages or even in other tribes. A man could count on their hospitality when travelling and if, for any reason, he had to run away from home. They were expected to put him in the way of good bargains and to see that he was conducted safely through unknown or hostile country; if two partners met in war they would spare one another, and a man might even secretly warn a blood-brother if his village was to be attacked. Blood-brothers fighting on the same side would defend one another, and a wounded *mukago* could not be abandoned.

The supernatural sanctions which safeguarded this compact were stronger than those attaching to any duty of kinship. Some have already been mentioned. There was also a special procedure by which one party to the compact could bring down vengeance upon the other, and which could be used in the case even of a trivial failure to fulfil its obligations. The offended *mukago* would secretly bring some coffee-berries, a new hoe ("to represent his wife"), and a new knife, and leave them in a new barkcloth in the doorway of the offender's house, stating aloud the injury which had been done him. Merely to look at this parcel might cause the death of the offender or of any of his children. A new door had to be made for them to go in and out by, and either a "doctor" or a man related to the head of the house through a woman was fetched to remove the parcel and throw it into the bush. The offended *mukago* was then summoned to a solemn reconciliation feast, after which both were washed with medicines by the "doctor", and they joined in buying a cow or goat for his fee. It was then possible for amends to be made for the injury if it was a question of repayment, but before this ceremony had been gone through it was dangerous for any goods to pass from one partner to the other.

The compact seems to have been strongly disapproved of by the missionaries, as part of their general disapproval of practices implying a belief in supernatural causes of death. Samwiri Nganda, the parson of Ngogwe, also said to me that a ceremony which involved drawing blood was disgusting and only worthy of heathen, and that such private compacts should not be entered into by Christians, who were all brothers in Christ. Nowadays the greatly increased opportunities of getting into debt would make any man hesitate before undertaking unlimited responsibility for a friend; this is the argument against the custom which was advanced by the hardheaded Kanywamagule. The need for it too has died out in the greater general security of modern times."[5]

It is stated above that each partner when making blood-brotherhood was provided with a fictitious wife if he was not yet married or his own wife was not present. *Mair* thinks that the idea behind this may perhaps be that the relationships which the ceremony creates will affect not only the man, but his whole household.

Many authors have touched upon the blood-brotherhood among the Ganda. In his monograph "The Baganda" *Roscoe* gives a description which is almost the same as that mentioned above. In another work, he adds, with regard to this custom, that if a slave made blood-brotherhood with a member of his master's family he took their totem and became a free man. When *Emin Pasha* became blood-brother to the king of Ganda, the ceremony followed the ritual described above but was perhaps not quite to the Pasha's taste, since he says "ein für meinen Theil nicht sehr appetitliches Verfahren, da der König den in Uganda so häufigen Pigmentschwund an den Händen hat".[6]

Lugard visited the Soga and he had to undergo the coffee-bean ceremony, after which the partners had to rub each other's shoulders and then shake hands vehemently in order to complete the contract. *Condon* gives a more detailed description of the ceremony among the same tribe. He states that those entering the contract must first procure a small branch of the coffee-tree shaped like a Y, and the branch was then broken in two with the coffee-berries on it. The subsequent procedure was the same as that described above. This investigator also mentions an important sociological factor. He says that a man who by blood-brotherhood became a relation and entered the family circle partook of all privileges allowed that family except one. If a man died leaving no issue, and without brothers to take his property, the property went to the next nearest relation, leaving out altogether the man who had made blood-brotherhood with the dead man; in this respect the blood-brother was not considered as one of the family. A blood-pact among the Soga was strongly binding, and a breach of the brotherhood lead to death. However, it was possible for this contract to be broken legitimately in the eyes of the natives. Such a case occurred in this tribe some years ago. A man became dangerous and his blood-brother became disgusted at his actions, for the blood-brother was also in danger for his life. He wished the blood-brotherhood to be dissolved. Then he came out publicly, got together some members of the family and declared to all present that he would no longer be bound by the contract he had made years before. He gave his reasons, and the blood-brotherhood was there and then dissolved.[7]

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[5] *Mair,* An African People, pp. 70 ff., 213.

[6] *Roscoe,* The Baganda, p. 19; *Id.,* Further Notes on the manners, p. 68; *Stuhlmann,* Mit Emin Pasha, p. 162, *Id.,* Die Tagebücher, p. 410; *Wilson-Felkin,* Uganda, II, p. 41; The blood-brotherhood is often alluded to in the Ganda Folklore: *Kollmann,* Eine Erzählung, pp. 382 ff; *Ashe,* Two Kings, p. 324; *Lubambula,* A Ganda Poem, p. 45; Cf. *Tegnæus,* Le héros, p. 153.

Blood-pacts were popular among the Nyoro. It is said that the king of this tribe entered very often into blood-brotherhood with his servants, especially his cooks. The ceremony had to begin at dawn. If the two men lived some distance apart, one came and spent the night with the other, so that they might be ready to begin early. There were many witnesses at the ceremony, the chief witness being the sister of the man at whose home it took place. The two friends sat down opposite each other and were given a razor of native make, with which first one and then the other, having pinched up a little flesh near the navel, made several slight incisions and caught a few drops of blood in his right hand. A coffee-berry was taken from its husk and each man took half the berry, rubbed it in the blood in his hand, and then held out his right hand with the berry in it to the other, who took it with his lips and swallowed it. Each in turn took a small bunch of leaves and brushed the other from the head down the arms, under the arms, and down the body to the feet. Each then promised to be true and faithful to the other and to his whole family, and they further cemented their alliance with a meal. In his work "A Walk across Africa," *Grant* describes the ceremony establishing blood-brotherhood, which differs a little from that quoted above. "Manua made brotherhood with the officer Kidjweega, as he had done with Bombay at Ukuni, but after a different fashion. A Wanyoro made a slight incision to the right above Manua's navel. His blood was tasted by Kidjweega, who had the same done to him by a Seedee, and Manua partook of his blood. These brotherhoods are synonymous with our masonic institutions, and do a great deal of good, as from that time for-

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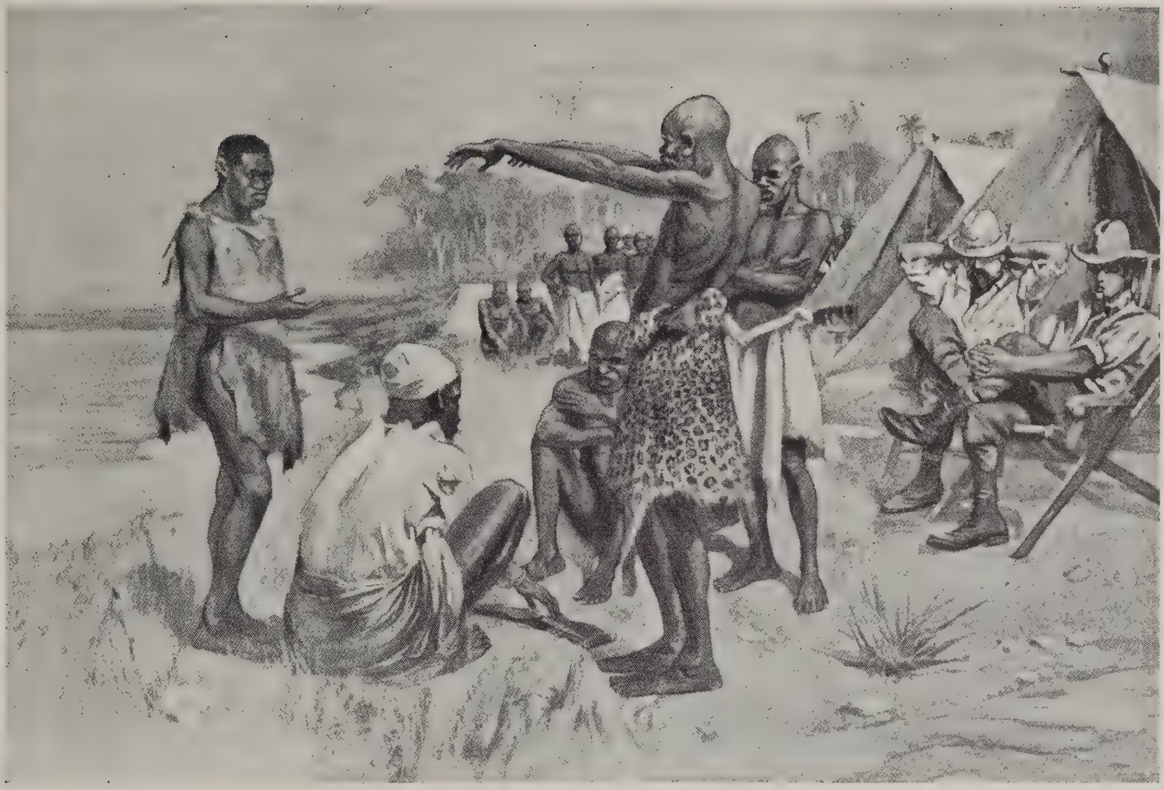
[7] *Lugard,* op. cit. I, p. 369; *Condon,* Contribution to the Ethnography, pp. 379 f.; Two English travellers in this region had to undergo the blood mixing ritual not only with the chief but also with the "Prime Minister," the *katikiro* of the tribe; *Ravenstein,* Messrs. Jackson & Gedge's Journey, p. 205.



Blood-brotherhood, Toro (after E. Grogan—A. Sharp).

ward friendship is sworn; and I must say that until the last moment these two men remained excellent friends. The work of civilisation may be promoted by this means, as the natives have no objection to make brotherhood with Europeans." But the Europeans were not always willing to undergo this ritual. When the king of Nyoro wished *Speke* to exchange blood with him, the European traveller refused: "As to exchanging my blood with a black man's, it was a thing quite beyond my comprehension."[8]

Regarding the ingredients of the ceremony, *Lugard* states that "salt or coffee-berry in Uganda and Unyoro is substituted for the meat."[9]

[8] *Roscoe,* The Bakitara or Banyoro, pp. 45 f., *Id.,* The Soul, p. 138; *Emin Bey,* Journal einer Reise, pp. 221 f, 395; *Emin Pascha,* Eine Sammlung, p. 75; *Grant,* A Walk across, pp. 271 f.; *Speke,* Journal of the Disvovery, pp. 420 f., Cf. *Baker,* Ismalia, 2, p. 375; *Id,* The Albert N'yanza, pp. 50, 63; *Emin Pascha,* Tagebücher, I, pp. 245, 281, IV, p. 286; *Williams,* Hima cattle, p. 31: In the absence of the husband the blood-brother always had the right of access to his wife. Cf. *Baumann,* Völker, p. 188.

[9] *Lugard,* op. cit. I, p. 331.

The Zambesi region, Southern Africa, the Angola and Congo regions

Let us commence with the Ila-speaking peoples about whom *Smith-Dale*'s monograph provides us with a great deal of information. A covenant of friendship was something greatly esteemed among the Ila. Some of the covenants were of a private nature and had little social significance. Two men, for example, entered into a friendship for the purpose of an exchange of wives and other temporary covenants were entered into for the exchange of food and medicines. A binding covenant was that of blood-brotherhood. Each of the two men cut his arm and sucked the other's blood, as the sign and seal of their vow, binding them not to refuse each other anything. If one broke the vow he would die on account of the blood, *kambo ka buloa.*[1]

Prof. *Gluckman* has been kind enough to give me information about the blood mixing rite among the Lozi, the dominant tribe of Barotseland. He writes to me: "This ceremony exists among the Lozi and most of the tribes in their kingdom. I am afraid I cannot at the moment give a detailed description of the ceremony, but in brief, cuts are made on the chests of the contracting parties and blood is drawn into beer which they both drink. They are then regarded as related and treated as blood kinsmen. That is, their close families cannot inter-marry."[2]

From his studies among the tribes in the Upper Zambesi region, *Jacottet* reports that the Rotse-Lui practised blood-brotherhood. When two men wished to become blood-brothers they went through a ceremony presided over by the witch-doctor. Blood was drawn from their chests and mixed in a small vessel, from which they drank it, together with beer from a calabash. The medicine man meanwhile recited a list of the curses they would suffer if they broke the tie they had undertaken. The alliance was a very strong one; blood-brothers held everything in common, even their wives.[3]

Instances of blood-brotherhood are reported from the north-eastern border of this region, but the accounts are vague. We are merely told that there were blood-brothers and blood-sisters among the Matumbi, and that they had no common property rights.[4] The Mafiti also practised blood-brotherhood, as a European traveller concluded a blood-pact with them, which they are said to have respected; but nothing is said about the manner of the ceremony.[5]

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[1] *Smith-Dale,* The Ila-speaking peoples, I, p. 308.

[2] (Letter 29/1, 1952) For a description of the Lozi vid. *Gluckman,* Kinship and Marriage among the Lozi, pp. 166 ff.

[3] *Jacottet,* Études sur ... Textes Louyi, pp. 180 f.

[4] *Weckauf* Die Wamatumbi, p. 383.

If we now turn southward, we find that blood-brotherhood seldom occurs in its stricter sense, that is, between men wishing to seal a friendship or between tribes wishing to conclude a peace. Instead, the exchange of blood between man and woman at marriage is more usual. We may consider first the Lemba, one of the Shona tribes of Southern Rhodesia. In this tribe bride and bridegroom mixed their blood before the comsummation of the marriage; a 'doctor' was called in to make incisions on their bodies and to mix the blood.[6]

Stayt gives the following account of the wedding ceremony among the Venda. The young couple is presented to the medicine-man. He "gives them a clay dish and tells them both to urinate into it, first the man and then the girl. He then mixes drugs and water with the urine. He makes small incisions in the knees, hips, abdomens (just below the umbilicus), and necks of them both, and rubs the blood from the male into the female, and vice versa. He then gives them some of the mixture to drink. After the conclusion of this ceremony the two are husband and wife."[7]

Among the Lovedu husband and wife mixed blood prior to their sexual intercourse after marriage, and after a miscarriage or the death of a child.[8] Prof. *J. D. Krige* has been kind enough to give me new detailed information about this custom, not only as it occurs among the Lovedu, but among many neighbouring tribes as well. We will quote in full from Prof. *Kriege*'s letter:

"I know the 'blood mixing' rite, from personal observation, in a large number of N. Transvaal tribes, including the Venda, Lobedu, Tswale, Moila, Khaha (Kxaxa), Muxbuya, Dikxale, Tlokwa, Xananwa, and Moletse. As far as this area is concerned, it is a custom which seems to belong to the Venda-Lobedu complex, and its occurrence among the other (surrounding) tribes is probably a result of borrowing, for, among such tribes as the Xananwa and Moletse it is not a concomitant of every marriage, but only in those cases in which some danger is anticipated from the union of diverse 'bloods', while among the Khaha, Tlokwa, Muxbuya and Kikxale it seems to be confined to the case of a man inheriting his deceased brother's wife (levirate); moreover, a little further afield, as among the Shai, Phalaborwa, Pedi, Matlala, Letswalo it is unknown.

There is a description of the rite in Stayt's 'The Bavenda'. Actually the details given there are somewhat varied in other tribes and within any particular tribes as between individual cases. Among the Lobedu I have found the following. The mixing rite is called *hu thaganthswa* (the mixing). At the end of the marriage ceremonial, before actual consummation of the marriage, the doctor is called and some or most of the following features are found – the details vary:

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[5] *Bley,* Urwald, Dschungel und Savannah, p. 33.

[6] *Jaques,* Notes on the Lemba, p. 246.

[7] *Stayt,* The Bavenda, p. 149.

[8] *Krige,* The Realm of a Rain-Queen, p. 214. Some interesting information about a ceremony in connection with marriage among the Nyakyusa at the North end of Lake Nyasa has been sent to me by Prof. *Monica Wilson:* "I know of no blood-mixing rite among the Nyakyusa, but I have just been translating a text in which our informant compared the drinking of a certain medicine, *ikipiki,* by the wife in the marriage ritual with the Swahili rite of making blood-brothers mixing the blood: 'There is one *ikipiki* used in all the three rituals, puberty, birth and death ... *Ikipiki* is our kinship, it is our blood' ..." (Letter 24/10, 1951).

1. The doctor puts medicine, some roots and bark in water in a pot. Stones are heated and, when redhot, they are put into the pot and the couple, covered with a blanket, are 'steamed' together.

2. Thereafter the couple are 'mixed' near the pot if the first stage was as described under (1), otherwise in a hut. The essential feature is the mixing of the blood of the prospective husband and wife. Small incisions or scarifications are made on various parts of the body — including invariably what they call the 'heart' — the depression just below the larynx — below the navel, on the back at about the same level, the hips & below the ears. There may be incisions also on the knees, arms, the back between the shoulders. Then follows either (3) or (4) or both.

3. Weak beer *(wapoto)* is brought in a vessel and the couple are made to spit into it. The girl then stirs it up and each drinks from the same vessel.

4. The doctor mixes some blood from each with his medicine and rubs the mixture into the incisions. The boy's mother apparently must watch this operation, called *Khitela* (injection). A goat is killed, of which the doctor gets a special portion (nowadays the whole except the front leg). A thin slice is cut from the liver of the goat, smeared with medicine and the boy and girl are made to take opposite sides in their mouths and eat till they meet halfway. They sit facing one another.

The ceremony is said to unite the couple and to remove the danger of sexual intercourse. For it is thought that, unless these precautions are taken, such intercourse may result in the dreaded *deri,* or so-called women's disease from which many men are supposed to die. After the rite the marriage may be consummated without danger."[9]

Another instance from the Sotho groups is mentioned by *Grützner* as early as 1877, but he does not mention which particular tribes had this practice. He states that on the morning after the consummation of the marriage the medicine-man scratched husband and wife on the inner side of the elbow, hand, foot, and knee, took the blood from the wife's wounds and smeared it on the wounds of her husband.[1]

Dr. *Hilda Kuper*'s book "An African Aristocracy" provides us with a great deal of information about blood-mixing among the Swazi tribes, especially as it occurs in the ritualisation of the king. This ritualisation has as one of its essential features the creation of blood ties between the king and certain of his subjects: "The relationship is spoken of as *sihlanganiso* (union), from *kuhlanganisa* (to unite). Until Mswati's time the ritual was practised not only by the Dlamini king, but by heads of other leading clans such as the Mahlalela, Simelane, and Mngometfulu. With the development of the central Dlamini kingship, it seems to me that the blood pact of local chiefs lost importance, and it survives among them now only in attenuated forms. The actual operation is not practised, but special individuals are regarded as being in particularly close association with the chief. The men with whom the king or chiefs form the relationship are called *tinsila,* from *insila* — a word that means filth, dirt of the body. *Insila* is an essential part of the self which, even when it has been removed by washing or scraping, remains intimately linked with the person, so that, on the principle of contagious magic, whoever obtains possession of the 'filth' can influence the owner. The king or the chief is not spoken of as *insila;* the partners are termed their *tinsila* . . .

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[9] (Letter 23/1, 1951).

[1] *Grützner,* Uber die Gebräuche, p. 84; The mission to which he belonged was mainly active among the Matlala, Moletse and neighbouring tribes.

When the king is nearing puberty, but still in the *lusasa,* the councillors send to well-known lineages of the Mdluli and Motsa clans to bring back from each a boy of roughly the same age as the heir apparent. 'It is necessary that their blood does not surpass his in strength.' The boys have in no way been prepared for their new rôles, and Ngolotsheni says that in his case it was a terrible shock to find that he had been selected for a post that was known to be onerous and dangerous. The parents of the boys are unable to refuse to give up their sons, and must, moreover, make a show of pleasure in obeying the royal command . . .

The ceremony takes place in private. The first operation is performed between the yong king and the Mdluli. The *inyanga* makes tiny cuts (verb *kugata*) with a special knife on various parts of the body of the Mdluli. The incisions are made on the right side of the body — right wrist, right ribs, between the big and second toe of the right foot, and so on. Similar cuts are made on the right side of the king. The *inyanga* takes a little blood from the Mdluli and rubs it into the cuts on the king's body, and then he rubs blood from the king into the Mdluli. Into the cuts he also rubs medicines that have been charred and powdered. A similar operation is performed on the left side with the Motsa and the king. The Mdluli is henceforth known as the 'right-hand *insila*' and the Motsa as the 'left-hand *insila*' . . . During the operation no oath is taken, but the union is as real as if life had been pledged for 'the medicine and the blood work without words. They are with power; they speak in the body.' The making of incisions and the rubbing of burnt and powdered medicines into the blood which oozes forth is very common in Swazi doctoring — the interchange of blood is, however, unusual — and the blood is the most potent of part of the treatment . . . The bond is of so intimate and compulsive a character that it acts automatically. As a result, the king and the *tinsila* are closely identified and whatever happens to the one will, Swazi believe, affect the other."[2]

There is a similar ritual exchange of blood at the marriage of the king and his chief wife, the 'right-hand queen.' She enters the harem with the king and a ceremonial operation is performed in the ritual hut. National doctors make incisions on her right side and do the same to the king. Their blood is then mixed.[3]

The importance of the blood bond is indicated by the fact that the death of a senior *insila* or of one of the ritual queens during the lifetime of the king is regarded as a direct attack on the king himself. It is a greater menace to the king than the death of a full brother or any other subject. So close is the identification that should an *insila* predecease the king, he is not recognized sociologically as dead. His widows may not weep for him publicly, nor don mourning robes; his kinsmen may not practise the usual mortuary rites, and so on. The possession of the king's blood raises the status of the *tinsila* above that of other subjects. They are recognized as standing with the king in national affairs. The right-hand *insila* is important in warfare and is described as 'the fighting hand of the nation.' The left-hand *insila* is primarily important in the annual ceremony of kingship, and it is he who, at the death of the king, assists the doctors to handle the corpse and prepare it for burial. They should always be available for the ritual needs of the king, and one of their main duties is to wash the king in medicinal potions; they go with him into his sacred enclosure in the cattle byre, and help prepare his medicines and his food.[4]

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[2] *Kuper,* An African, pp. 78 f.

[3] *Ib.,* p. 80.

Dr. *Kuper* considers the question of how far the Swazi blood bond may be regarded as an instance of blood-brotherhood and says, among other things, that the term blood-brotherhood implies the creation of a kinship tie, the admisson of a stranger into a group through relationship bestowed by blood. Among the Swazi, the ritual transmission of the king's medicated blood brings the *tinsila* into a relationship that is both more intimate than and different in effect from that of full brothers. The blood bond between a man and his wives is obviously not analogous to the creation of a kinship tie, for that would be a breach of exogamy—a marriage with artificially created sisters while marriage with real sisters is prohibited. The artificial blood bond is a ritual act. The bond protects the king from the danger sent him by possible rivals and enemies; the bond with women protects him from the dangers associated with the act of sex. And Dr. *Kuper* concludes: "The Swazi blood transference is not blood-brotherhood in the usual sense of the word. The 'blood' creates a mystic bond that is part of the power and personality of kings, and in former times was part of the power and personality of clan leaders. It is an enforced relationship. It does not cement ties already existing between friends. Whereas in most primitive societies the covenant is open to all tribesmen, among the Swazi it is a prerogative of leading men, more particularly of the king. In other tribes there is a wide range from whom to choose the partner, whereas among the Swazi the choice is delimited by clan membership. Usually it is a voluntary act, but among the Swazi it is a compulsory bond. Elsewhere an oath is essential, whereas among the Swazi no verbal pledge is taken. It is usually entered into between people of the same sex and status and of opposite as well as of the same sex."[5]

Dr. *Kuper* has also informed me in a letter that "among the Swazi, in addition to blood mixing in the ritualisation of the king, there is a mutual exchange in cases of remarriage of widows and widowers and in other types of doctoring among commoners, as well aristocrats. The interchange on re-marriage is widely spread among the Southern Bantu and is also practised by the Hottentots."[6]

The available information about the occurrence of blood-brotherhood among the Zulu is not very definite. According to one account, among the Zulu and Pondo the drinking of milk with a member of another clan was tantamount to pledging blood-brotherhood with him, and prevented marriage in that clan.[7] Dr. *Kuper* states that the ritual exchange of blood also occurs between man and wife, and sometimes between men among Zulu, Venda, and some Tonga. She refers to a case of blood exchange among the Zulu, though this was a medicinal measure. When the Zulu king was sick, some of his special male attendants had to supply blood for transfusion into the king, receiving some of his blood in return. It is also mentioned that if a Zulu headman noticed that after cohabiting with one of his wives their blood did not agree — that he felt exhausted and ill — he called a doctor who made incisions on the body of the man and the woman and mixed their blood with medicines.[8]

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[4] *Ib.*, pp. 81 f.

[5] Ib., p. 84.

[6] (Letter 11/12, 1951).

[7] *Richards*, Hunger and Work, p. 96.

Prof. *Gluckman* informs me, with regard to this rite among the Zulu: "I myself did not collect any information in the field of blood mixing rites among the Zulu. I am certain that the Zulu have the same ceremonies for chiefs and attendants as Dr. Kuper described in the Swazi. But the Zulu do not have the ceremony of blood-brotherhood among commoners."[9]

This absence of the blood mixing rite among Zulu commoners perhaps explains why *Bryant* says that "blood-brothership had never been heard of."[1]

Professor *Schapera* tells me in a letter that blood mixing rites are practised by *all the Tswana tribes.*[2] The rites are associated with the belief in "hot blood." Thorough measures have to be taken against the evil effects of sexual intercourse with certain people. Thus a woman who is pregnant in adultery must "join her blood" with that of her husband before they resume cohabitation, since the blood in her body is not his and may inflict sickness on him. The doctor called for the purpose cuts them both on the pubis. He wets his finger with the blood flowing from the husband, dips it into his magical paste, and rubs it into the cuts made on the wife. He then repeats the rite by transferring the wife's blood in the same way to the husband. After this, the couple may sleep together in safety.

The main application of blood mixing among the Tswana is, however, in rendering a widow or widower fit for sexual intercourse with a new spouse. Remarriage takes place after a waiting-period of about a year, and at the wedding the blood of bride and groom is "joined" in the manner described below.[3]

At ordinary weddings, even when bride and groom are members of the Church, they are doctored in a traditional manner by having a medicinal paste rubbed into small cuts made on their bodies, to protect them from witchcraft and other evils.[4]

Prof. *Schapera* has been kind enough to send me two brief statements about the practice of remarriage of widow or widowers. These statements were dictated to him by two magicians of the Kgatla tribe:

"*(Informant: Rapedi Letsebe, May 1931)*

A widow or widower wishing to remarry must go with his prospective spouse to a magician (like Rapedi himself). The magician cuts each of them above the pubic region and at the base of the spine. He then dips his little finger into the blood flowing from the woman, dips it next into certain medicines, and then rubs it into the cuts made on the man; similarly, he takes blood from the man's cuts, dips it into the medicines, and then rubs it into the cuts made on the woman. The ceremony is done either inside the hut, or in the open courtyard of their homestead, the man and woman sitting next to each other on the bare ground. The medicine used is the roots of the plant *tsipisebogale* (also called *pelobotlhoko,* "sore heart"); the roots are burned, and ground to powder in a potsherd, into which the magician then dips his finger as described above. The rite is done so that "the bloods of the man and woman should agree"; if they are not treated in this way, they will get a "strong sickness" (cough and fever). After the cutting, the rest of the medicine in the potsherd is mixed with fat, with which the couple must smear their bodies when they go to bed that night. The man should also take a little of the ointment and smear it on the inside of his nostrils.

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[8] *Kuper,* op. cit. pp. 82 ff. Cf. *Shooter,* The Kaffirs, p. 117.

[9] (Letter 29/1, 1952).

[1] *Bryant,* The Zulu People, p. 233.

[2] (Letter 1/1, 1952).

[3] *Schapera,* Married Life in an African Tribe, pp. 211 f., 315.

[4] *Ib.,* p. 76.

(Informant: Natale Natale, January 1934)

Before a widow can sleep with any man (after the death of her husband), she must tell him that she is a widow and that he must go to get medicines from a doctor or magician (like Natale himself). The man is given the roots of the plants *mopenwaeng* and *monyaweyawe,* and instructed how to use them. He must cut them very fine, and put the fragments on to burning coal in a potsherd. Then he and the woman sit facing each other, her legs being pushed under his; they are both naked, and the potsherd is placed between them, and as the smoke rises from it they cover themselves with a blanket and are bathed by the smoke. Then they grind the ashes. Then the man makes four small cuts under the woman's navel, and also at the back in the hollow above her buttocks; and she does the same to him. Then each takes the blood of the other on his (or her) finger, dips it into the powdered ashes, and rubs it into the cuts on his (her) own body. Afterwards the woman mixes what is left of the ashes with sheep fat, and smears it, in the form of a big cross, right across the skin mat on which they will sleep. After this they can safely indulge in full coitus."

We now turn to the hunting peoples of south-western Africa and begin with the Khoisan.

Before marrying, a young Bushman of the Kung tribe has incisions made on his stomach, back and thighs. The girl is also cut, and the blood of the two is mixed separately with some medicine by the "doctor" of the same sex. The mixtures are then exchanged for application.[5]

As already mentioned, according to Dr. *Kuper,* the Hottentots also practise an exchange of blood, although only in the case of remarriage.[6] Among the Hottentots, the only available information about a custom resembling blood-brotherhood comes from the Nama. They had a form of brotherhood which a man might enter into with the son or daughter of his sister, with mutual aid as the object. It was called *magus* (to give one another). The nephew sent a ewe to his uncle's house on an appointed day, and there it was slaughtered. The carcass was divided and each ate his portion at a feast in his own house. The feast was called *gao nais,* which means "to cut the navel."[7] *Wanderer* suggests that this refers to a severance of the umbilical cord, *but might we not rather associate the term with the not uncommon practice in Africa of making an incision near the navel in the rite of blood-brotherhood?* Other informants state that two men, two women, or a man and a woman, very often of distant clans or tribes, could establish such an artificial bond of brotherhood. This relationship aimed primarily at mutual aid in economic matters, but also frequently involved sexual or even homosexual relations. Somewhat akin to this brotherhood is another intimate bond, which is initiated by one of the parties drinking from a bowl of water, nowadays often coffee, and then handing the rest of the liquid to the other to drink.[8]

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[5] *Crosby,* Notes on the Bushmen, p. 351.

[6] See above p. 94.

[7] *Wandrer,* Die Khoi-Khoin, p. 315.

The Bergdama, a people existing in very small nomadic groups among the Hottentots, the Bushmen and the Herero, are racially a true negro people, different in appearance from both the Hottentots and the Bushmen. They practise a blood-mixing ritual at marriage. The bride's mother makes cuts on the thighs of the bride and groom, and rubs the man's blood over the woman's cuts, the woman's over the man's.[9] In view of the fact that the Bergdama have assimilated the customs of their Hottentot and Bushman neighbours, there is a strong suggestion that they have also derived the wedding custom from them. But the reverse may be the case.

The only information about the Ambo group bordering on the Angola area is negative. *Rautanen* says that artificial relationship and blood-brotherhood do not occur among the Ndonga.[1]

On the other hand, the custom is of wide occurrence in the Angola area. We meet with exchange of blood both in connection with marriage rites and between friends. *Hambly* states that among the Mbundu an exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is sometimes made between husband and wife, at night and in secret. It is said that those who exchange blood will die at the same time.[2]

The Mbundu also have a blood mixing custom resembling that which occurs in other parts of Negro Africa. One of the purposes to which the Mbundu apply this blood-brotherhood is to set a seal on an alliance between chiefs.[3]

Magyar has an account of the *kissoko* friendship "the closest tie of friendship existing among the Negroes."[4] It was on his journey among the Mbunda that *Magyar* had his attention drawn to the usefulness of such an alliance. The ceremony of drinking the *kissoko* drink was as follows. The master of ceremonies made an incision in the left arm of each of the "brothers"; the blood which flowed was collected in a calabash. This blood was mixed with beer and the brothers drank the mixture while they embraced each other. The two blood-brothers hold their property in common, including their wives, and they had to be faithful to each other unto death.

Childs is of the opinion that blood-brotherhood was doubtless undertaken among the Mbundu purely from motives of friendship.[5]

It has been said that blood-friendship was known among the Chokwe and the Shilange (Bena Lulua), but not among the Lunda.[6] But *Baumann*, in his comprehensive work on the Lunda states that the practice was known among them, as well as among the Chokwe and the Luena.[7]

He describes blood-brotherhood among the Chokwe, and says that exchange of blood creates a close social tie. *Kasendo* is the name given to the custom, which is surprisingly vigorous in the Chokwe culture. If a man has been hospitably received in another village, he may propose *kasendo* to his host. They cut their forearms and press the wounds together to mix their blood. However, blood-brotherhood is most usually contracted in the initiation ceremonies, *mukanda.*[8]

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[8] *Schapera*, The Khoisan Peoples, pp. 321 ff., 243. Cf. *Murdock*, Our primitive, p. 490.

[9] *Irle*, Die Herero, p. 154.

[1] *Rautanen*, Die Ondonga, pp. 328 f.

[2] *Hambly*, The Ovimbundu, pp. 187 f.

[3] *Ib.*, pp. 316, 290.

[4] *Magyar*, Reisen in Südafrika, I, pp. 201 f.

[5] *Childs*, Umbundu Kinship, p. 129.

[6] *Von Danckelman*, Mittheilungen, p. 256.

[7] *Baumann*, Lunda, pp. 132 f.

Baumann gives an example of blood-brotherhood between a Chokwe and a member of another tribe, in this case a Luena man. The latter broke faith, and this caused a war between the two tribes.[9]

This author makes an important observation. He thinks that the blood-pact between man and wife, "um das Ehebündnis noch fester zu gestalten", is of late origin, and custom of entering *kasendo* without real exchange of blood even more recent.[1]

As mentioned above, the Lunda were acquainted with this practice. When in the course of his missionary travels *Livingstone* passed through the great Lunda kingdom he had an opportunity of witnessing the blood-pact, and he gives the following description of the *kassendi,* as it was here called. The hands of the parties being joined, small incisions were made on their clasped hands, on the pit of the stomach, and on the right cheek and forehead. With a stalk of grass, a small quantity of blood was taken from each of these incisions. The blood from the one was put into a pot of beer and that of the second into another. Each then drank the other's blood, and they were thenceforward supposed to be "perpetual friends and relations." While the beer was being drunk, some of the party beat the ground with short clubs and uttered sentences "by way of ratifying the treaty." The men belonging to each party then finished the beer. The principals in the performance of *kassendi* were henceforth considered blood-relations and were bound to disclose to each other any impending evil. Alliances founded on such blood-pacts were looked upon with great favour by the Lunda chiefs, as securing the goodwill of the Kololo.[2]

Melland describes blood-brotherhood as practised by the Lunda and their neighbours the Kaonde. He says that the custom was very old and exceedingly popular, though abuses were creeping in, possibly owing to the distintegrating effect of European rule. The contract was made with a fellow tribesman or a stranger for purposes of mutual aid, always between two men or two women, who were usually of the same social status. A chief could become blood-brother to a commoner among the Lunda, however, and possibly among some sections of the Kaonde.[3]

As regards the method of contracting blood-brotherhood, the proposer first gave a small "dowry-gift" to the other, after the acceptance of which the contract was sealed by an exchange of blood and more valuable gifts. Among the Kaonde each of the contracting parties made a slight incision in the wrist or arm of the other and drank a drop of the blood therefrom. Among the Lunda, the blood was taken from the chest, mixed

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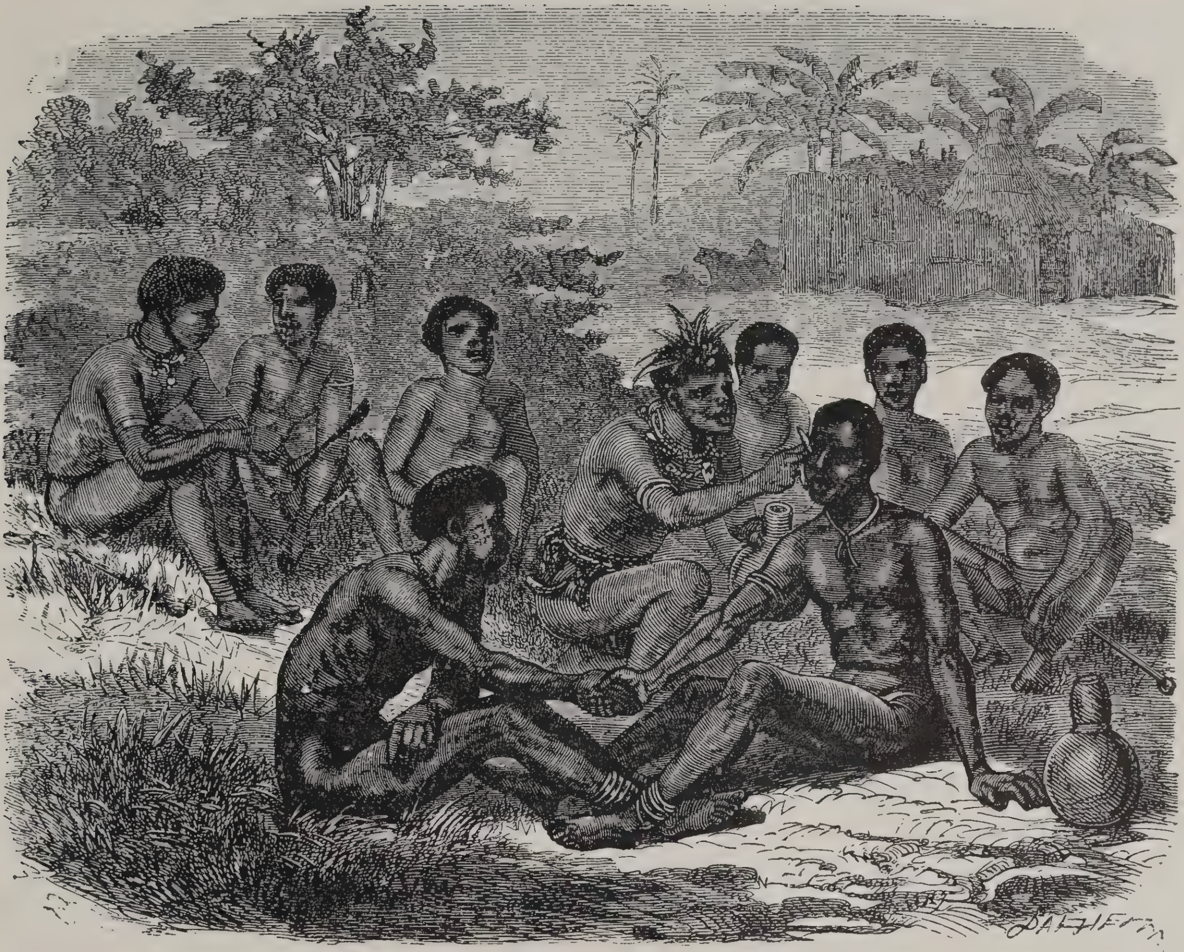
[8] *Baumann,* Die Mannbarkeitsfeiern, p. 13, *Id.,* Lunda, p. 105.

[9] *Baumann,* Lunda, p. 132; an instance of blood-brotherhood among the Luena is mentioned by *Crawford,* Thinking Black, p. 306.

[1] *Baumann,* op. cit. p. 133.

[2] *Livingstone,* Missionary Travels, pp. 488 f. Livingstone became "blood-brother" to a young woman by accident when a little of her blood squired into his eye while he was removing a tumour from her arm, p. 489. Regarding the Kololo, wid. *Baumann,* Völker, p. 110.

[3] *Melland,* In Witch bound Africa, p. 111.



Blood-brotherhood, Lunda (after J. Wood).

with beer, and drunk to the accompaniment of solemn vows. The bond thus contracted was comparable in strength to that of the totem among the Kaonde, stronger than tribal ties though weaker than family ties among the Lunda. Blood-brothers would help each other as far as their resources allowed, and had a moral right to expect the aid of the other. The hospitality accorded to a blood-brother often included access to a wife. As regards sisters, however, there appeared to be a distinction. Among the Lunda an unmarried sister would very naturally be suggested as a temporary companion for the visitor, but among the Kaonde, a man must treat his blood-brothers sister as his own sister, even to the extent of sexual exclusion.

Regarding the duration of the pact, it was frequently of only a few year's duration and might be dissolved by a civil suit brought by one of the parties who happened to be dissatisfied with the material benefits that had accrued or hand failed to accrue to him. This dissolution of the blood-brotherhood occurred without any manifestation of regret or animosity on either side.[4]

Many instances of the blood rite have been reported from the tribes west of the Kaonde, around Lake Moero, and to the north. *Livingstone* witnessed it among the Bemba-Wemba, Tabwa and Bango-Bango. The main feature of the ceremony was that a small incision was made in the arm of each person, their bloods mixed, and a declaration of friendship uttered. In most cases peace was ratified by this drinking of blood.[5]

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[4] *Melland*, op. cit. pp. 110 ff.

Delhaise also observed the rite among the Bemba, and he states that the Tumbwe (Holoholo) had a similar custom. His description of the Bemba procedure mentions that each participant took from the other's arm a small sliver of flesh, which he immediately swallowed. Prior to this, the two men had washed with water in which had been boiled a preparation of roots gathered the day before. If one blood-brother died, the nails and hair of the survivor were wrapped in leaves and buried with him. Blood could also be exchanged between husband and wife. Blood-brothers had to aid each other on all occasions.[6]

Schmitz's description of the rite among the Holoholo deviates from the above in some respects. According to him each man made an incision in his forearm, and they held the cuts together to mix the bloods. They then declared to one another that everything they had would thenceforward be held in common: house, belongings and wives.[7]

Further instances come from Sanga, Lungu, Ushi and Rua. In the latter case the blood-brotherhood was with the chief of the tribe, and the explorer declares that the chief's sole object was to obtain as many gifts as possible.[8] Among the Lungu the formalities were as follows. A big mat was spread on the ground and the two contracting parties sat on it, one facing the other, in the midst of an immense gathering of the dependents of either party, who were ranged in a circle. A noble, a chief, or an old man had to preside at such a rite. An explorer has described what took place after these preliminaries. "The president ordered two chickens to be killed and their livers were roasted in our presence. During this time, one of the 'nyampara' (inferior chiefs) of Mpala made an incision in my chest with a spear-head, while one of my men did the same to the negro sultan. The grilled livers were then brought us steeped in the blood of the future brothers. I put in the mouth of the 'Mtemi' (chief) the liver moistened with my blood, while he made me eat the liver moistened with his own. In short, a little lunch not very appetizing. The first part of the ceremony was over. Next we came to the oaths, which were pronounced by third persons. The whole time they lasted, spear-points were clashed above the head of each of the initiated. 'Mtemi,' said a black orator, addressing himself to Mpala, 'you are now the white man's brother; if you do him harm, him, or any one belonging to him, you will die; if you war on him, you will die, the members of your family will die, and your power disappear.' Lusinga, chief of the district, then took up the discourse and addressing himself to me: 'White man.' said he, 'the oath of the friendship by which you bind yourself to-day to Mpala should be sincere; you come in the midst of us, you cannot despise us. If you do evil to Mpala or any one belonging to him, you will die; all your people will die and your power pass away.' "[9]

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[5] *Livingstone,* The Last Journals, I, pp. 220, 258, II, pp. 26 f.

[6] *Delhaise,* Chez les Wabemba, pp. 184 f. *Id.,* Chez les Warundu et les Wahorohoro, p. 438.

[7] *Schmitz,* Le Baholoholo, p. 198.

[8] *Reichard,* Bericht, VGEB 1883, p. 118.

The instance from the Sanga was quite different. The pact was sealed by drinking from a goblet in which the two contracting parties had mixed their blood. On the same occasion the French explorer gave his country's colours to the native chief.[1]

There was a Catholic Mission among the Mazanze-Tabwa on the west coast of Tanganyika. In the series entitled "Près des Grands Lacs" we find a description of the way in which Father Moinet entered into blood-brotherhood with the king of this tribe. The two contracting parties sat opposite each other with legs interlaced and their feet resting on a bow lying on the ground. Arrows and spears were planted in the earth between the cord and the bow on one side; on the other were placed a gun, the barrel in the ground and the stock in the air. Some drops of blood from each of the contractees were mixed with honey. Oaths and speeches concerning the significance of the rite were delivered as usual, after which the two parties swallowed the 'drink.' A sham battle was then fought between members of the Mission and the tribe.[2]

Blood-brotherhood also existed among the Gua-Tumbwe. *Cameron* has given the following description of the procedure on one occasion. After an incision had been made on the right wrists of the parties, just sufficient to draw blood, a little of the latter was scraped off and smeared on the partner's cut. Gunpowder was then rubbed in. "The concluding part of the ceremony was performed by Pakwanywa's sponsor holding a sword resting on his (Pakwanywa's) shoulder, whilst he who acted for Syde went through the motions of sharpening a knife on it. Both sponsors meanwhile made a speech, calling down imprecations on Pakwanywa and all his relations, past, present and future, and praying that their graves might be defiled by pigs if he broke the brotherhood in word, thought, or deed. The same form having been gone through with respect to Syde, the sponsors changing duties, the brother-making was complete."[3]

In his monograph on the Songe, *Van Overbergh* states that blood-brothers were unknown among both the Luba and the Songe.[4] *Moeller* relates, however, that a Songe chief became blood-brother of a neighbouring chief in order that they might form an alliance to carry out attacks on other tribes.[5]

Regarding the Luba, *Colle* confirms *Van Overbergh's* statement. But when *Wissmann* was travelling in the Luba country the Luba chief proposed that they should conclude blood-brotherhood or *kischila.* This should properly have been performed by drinking blood mixed with water; but on this occasion it was mixed with brandy.[6]

We find further among the Luba, Songe, Tetela, Kusu, Kanioka and other tribes an institution which goes under the name of *lusalo* or monogamous marriage by exchange of blood. This is a luba word meaning tattooing. It denotes also the exchange of blood between two men or two women, the object of the rite being to express, establish or confirm their mutual friendship. More often it denotes the exchange of blood between a man and a woman, and *lusalo* in this case initiates a monogamous marriage, indissoluble, consecrated by the exchange of blood, entered into in the presence of witnesses. At least two witnesses are required. *Lusalo* is possible without witnesses, but it is in this case not valid in law. It is without value other than for the two participants. The procedure is simple: The man makes a slight incision in the fore-arm of the woman and sucks a little blood from the wound; the woman does the same with the arm of the bridegroom. The rite is carried out in this manner in the region between Stanleyville and Bukama, and between the Congo and the Lomani.[7] After exchange of blood, the couple gives expression to their love for one another and the bonds of their marriage. We give here the three conceptions of the commitments undertaken by the man and woman, according to the form of the ceremony:

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[9] *Reichard,* Reise von Karema, p. 169. Cf. *Johnston,* George Grenfell and the Congo, II, pp. 687 f.

[1] *De Pont-Jest,* L'expédition du Katanga, p. 261; Concerning the Ushi, see *Giraud,* Les lacs de l'Afrique, pp. 304, 338–9.

[2] Près des Grands Lacs, p. 121.

[3] *Cameron,* Across Africa, I, pp. 33 f. He is of the opinion that the "custom of making brothers" is of Semitic origin, introduced into Africa by the Arabs trading there.

[4] *Van Overbergh,* Les Basonge, p. 278.

[5] Moeller, Les grandes lignes, p. 511.

[6] *Colle,* Les Baluba, p. 337; *Wissmann,* Im Innern, p. 151.

1. By exchanging blood the parties promise fidelity until death, with the exclusion of all subsequent marriage. This form, which is the most usual, excludes simultaneous polygamy but not successive polygamy.

2. The couple promise fidelity to one another until death. If one of them dies, the survivor may make a second marriage, but this second union must be sanctioned by an exchange of blood, and the new partner has to be chosen by the parents of the first, "to avoid the mixing of blood."

3. A third form binds the husband indissolubly to his wife, but in this case there is no exclusion of concubines.

This last form is not recognized by the Luba; they declare it impossible and assert that *lusalo* is incompatible with a plurality of wives. The authors says that this form seems to occur only in countries which have experienced Arab influence and it is probably a corruption of the *lusalo* practised by the Luba. The husband, especially if he is a chief or some other notable, may buy other wives besides the legitimate partner with whom he has entered an indissoluble monogamous union by means of *lusalo,* but he may not have matrimonial relations with these other 'wives.' It is obvious that the presence of many women in the household was a continual temptation against conjugal monogamy: the household women easily became concubines, and in this way the third form of *lusalo* arose. Although there are cases of such polygamous *lusalo* among the Ngwana, arabicised Congo negroes, it appears to be rather infrequent.

There are a number of punishments for breaking the ties of *lusalo;* bodily punishment, fines, return of the woman to her parents, enslavement, and even death. A dissolution of the *lusalo* is possible. In some regions sterility is ground for divorce. The witch-doctor may dissolve the marriage; he uses charms and medicines to make the couple vomit up "each other's blood" which they had swallowed at the *lusalo,* and they may both then marry again without danger.

A free man may not contract *lusalo* with a slave, but slaves may do so among themselves. If a free man should happen to enter such a union with a slave, the union is valid, but the couple is expelled from the tribe.[8]

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[7] *Louillet-Ferry,* Le "Lusalo", p. 21: They add that this is not the only manner, however: the exchange of blood is common to a number of tribes, but the mode of exchange differs in Tanganyika to the east and down towards the Portuguese Congo.

A court case from Ankoro in the Luba country provides an example of the combination of *lusalo* with religious marriage. The records of the case show that a man and a woman were bound by both a religious marriage and *lusalo;* the case arose when the woman left her husband in spite of this double bond, and returned to her father who obviously wished to marry her again with another man. The father was sentenced to prison and heavy fines.[9]

Van Melderen asserts, however, that the *lusalo* pact was formerly practised between chiefs, and never between a woman and a man. According to him, the procedure for the blood-pact required in the first place an incision in the region of the heart. The blood was collected in a leaf and the two chiefs applied it to each other's wounds. But after this they made a further incision, this time in the arm or wrist, wherupon they sucked the blood from each other's wounds. All their possessions were then held in common.[1]

We find a mixing of blood among the Yeke but here the pact was concluded in a symbolic manner. The incisions were made in the thighs of the contractees, the blood was mixed in a leaf, and the parties then rubbed it on each other.[2]

In his monograph on the Rega, *Delhaise* relates that the blood-pact may even be concluded within the family, which is noteworthy. He writes that after the usual incisions, here in the arm, the blood was mixed with a very ripe banana and then swallowed.[3]

Stanley recounts how a chief of the Rega entered into blood-brotherhood with him through one of his proxies, this being considered "as a pledge of goodwill and peace." *Stanley* even succeeded in establishing friendly relations with the war-like Genia by persuading them to "make blood-brotherhood." There is, however, no mention of the procedure adopted.[4] *Cameron* also witnessed the conclusion of such a pact among the same tribe, but even he mentions nothing about the procedure.[5]

A neighbouring tribe, the Songola, used a different method in their ceremonies for the blood-pact. Incisions were made in the arms of the principals and the wounds were rubbed together so that the flowing blood intermingled.[6]

A man from the Havu tribe on the western side of Lake Kivu told *Louillet* that in these tracts the performance of the rite required the incision to be made in the region of the navel, after which the blood was sucked up by the contracting parties.[7] Another instance from the same tribe refers to blood-brotherhood between a European explorer and the chief. In this case a small incision was made in the arm or chest of the two men, who were pledged to mutual aid; the blood was collected on two leaves, and sprinkled on the pieces of chicken-liver, which were eaten by the two men.[8]

Sucking of blood also occurred in the region around Stanley Falls. In his "Mystères du Congo" *Nirep* describes how a European physician accompanying an expedition to this region cured a Negro chief, and was offered blood-brotherhood by the grateful potentate. The ceremony took place in the chief's hut (see picture below). The white physician was placed on a chair, the master of ceremonies made an incision in his chest and the chief sucked the blood from the wound. The same procedure was repeated with the chief, whose blood was sucked up by the doctor. After this ceremony the Negro chief and the European were considered to be brothers to the death, owing each other mutual aid and assistance in all places and under all circumstances. They were attached to each other with an indissoluble tie, which could only be broken by death.

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[8] *Louillet-Ferry,* op. cit. pp. 22.

[9] *F. R.,* Mariage monogamique, p. 95.

[1] *Van Melderen,* Contribution, p. 227.

[2] *Grévisse,* Les Bayeke, p. 112.

[3] *Delhaise,* Les Warega, p. 187.

[4] *Stanley,* Through the Dark, II pp. 146, 178, 188.

[5] *Cameron,* op. cit. p. 369.

[6] *Delhaise,* Chez les Wasongola, p. 115.

[7] *Louillet-Ferry,* op. cit. 261.

[8] *Norden,* Auf neuen Pfaden, pp. 28 f.

It is interesting to note that this pact was also concluded with the smoking of a kind of pipe of peace. The chief first smoked his pipe of hemp, which was then handed over to his new blood-brother. After this followed a common drinking bout and some of the warriors of the tribe in full battle-dress performed a ritual fight.[9]

Empain states that there was no exchange of blood between families among the Kela. It was formely practised among the Kela, Hamba and Songo-Mino, but only as a guarantee of sincerity when peace was concluded.[1]

Weeks says that among the Kongo the blood-pact was resorted to in the case of hostilities between tribes. The ceremony required the two opponents or the chiefs to have a little blood taken from them, and each then drank the blood taken from the other. Two needles were now solemnly buried and a lasting peace was thus made.[2] *Van Wing* relates that Kongo boys exchanged blood in the course of their initiation ceremonies. At circumcision, the boy rubbed a piece of manioc bread in the blood on his foreskin, and presented it to a friend of his choice. This friend ate, and later returned the compliment, proffering in his turn a piece of this "brotherly food". The two boys were then blood-brothers for life; they often ate together, and helped one another in all circumstances.[3]

The same author describes a less objectionable form of the ceremony which was formerly used by prominent Kongo chiefs, by means of which they made themselves 'brothers', *mpangi*. They made incisions in their arms and held the cuts together so that their bloods mixed.[4]

Phillipart provides the additional information that a Kongo husband and wife could also enter into such a bond.[5]

The drinking of blood occurs among the Yombe in connection with the conclusion of a blood-pact. *Bittremieux* states that blood-brotherhood among them is called *kipfiela* and is entered into by friends to make peace. It is accompanied by curses on him who breaks the bond. Small incisions are made on the forehead and the blood is licked.[6] In this tract, and especially in the Portuguese Congo, they practise, according to *Louillet,* the monogamous marriage by exchange of blood, which we have already described.[7]

There are a lot of instances from the Middle Congo and the Gaboon regions.

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[9] *Nirep,* op. cit. III, pp. 328 ff.

[1] *Empain,* Les Bakéla, p. 244.

[2] *Weeks,* Among the Primitive, p. 194.

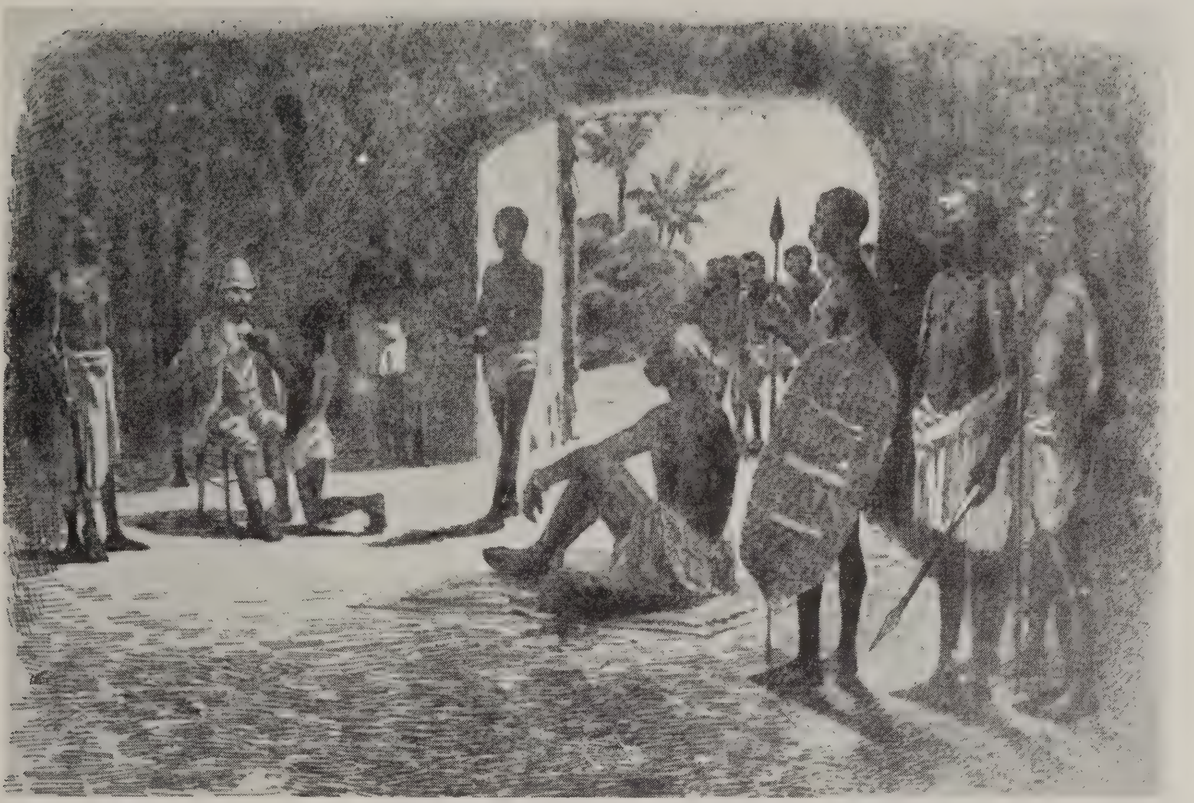
[3] *Van Wing,* Nzo Longo ou les rites de la puberté, p. 245.

[4] *Id.,* Études Bakongo, 134 n.

[5] *Phillipart,* Le Bas-Congo, p. 40.

[6] *Bittremieux,* De Geheime Sekte, p. 236. Cf. *Torday,* African Races, pp. 68 f.

[7] *Louillet-Ferry,* op. cit. p. 263.



Blood-brotherhood, Stanley Falls (after A. Nirep).

Stanley and several other travellers report that they concluded blood-pacts with the Teke and the Yanzi. The ritual was the following. They crossed arms, an incision was made in each arm, some salt was placed on the wound and then there was a mutual rubbing.[8] But if we turn to the accounts of other travellers we find a somewhat different version of the ceremonies in question among the Yanzi. *Hanssens* concluded a blood pact with the chief of this tribe. The latter, accompanied by his favourite wife and personal counsellor, sat down in front of Hanssens. Incisions were made in their arms, near the right elbow. A mysterious powder was sprinkled on the blood which appeared and the two cuts were rubbed together so as to mix the blood in the two wounds. The chief then enumerated the obligations which the European had contracted. *Hanssens* wished to have a written pact signed. He signed himself and passed the pen to the chief, who took it cautiously and after much hesitation signed the document with a cross.[9] *Johnston* was, it appears, one of the principals at such a ceremony in the same tribe. The incision was made in the usual way, and afterwards the future blood-brother "greedily sucked the drops of blood." But *Johnston* himself "made a show of doing so."[1]

Other explorers in these tracts say that "chiefs as well as almost every friendly disposed man of importance . . . were very desirous to seal friendship by the ceremony of blood-brotherhood" . . . "at every place where the boat or canoe stopped for a night's rest or a prolonged sojourn a proposal of blood-brotherhood was made by the chief or headman as an alternative to hostilities or isolation. Sometimes the sacrifice was exchanged through delegates, because after I had required about half a dozen boisterous black brothers my arm became very sore with the tiny cuts made for the bloodletting."[2]

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[8] *Stanley,* The Congo, II, pp. 24, 385.

[9] *Droogmans,* Le Congo, pp. 75 ff; *Coquilhat,* Sur le Haut Congo, pp. 92 f.

[1] *Johnston,* The River Congo, p. 286.

Teisserès describes the conclusion of peace between the Galoa and Mpongwe. The chiefs met, surrounded by their principal followers. A man arrived and made slight cuts between thumb and forefinger of the chiefs. Each chief took some of the other's blood on a piece of banana and ate it. They shook hands, and peace was made.[3]

From the Pangwe *Trilles* gives reports in his two Anthropos monographs. Here it is evidently only a matter of a mixing of blood. If any blood is drunk, it is "le sang du totem." During the actual rite scratches are made, the blood is mixed in a leaf and so forth. The same author mentions a mixing of blood in the initiation ceremonies.[4]

Pauli relates that some mulatto traders became blood-brothers of the Pangwe king to obtain his protection. They licked the blood from cuts in each other's arms and it is said that this mode of contracting blood-brotherhood is confirmed by one of the members of Brazza's expedition.[5]

In the Gaboon region there was a blood-pact which *Bastian* calls a "fetish-giving' ceremony and which he describes as follows. He says that in the presence of all the inhabitants a kola-nut was divided among the friends, whereupon a fetish-man made an incision in the arm of each of the two. Into the spurting blood were dipped the halves of the nut of which each ate one, after he had uttered an imprecation, laying a curse on all who might do harm to the friend or his family. Then the pulp chewed by the friend was laid on the arm of his friend, the wound of the one rubbed against that of the other, and a feast sealed their intimate brotherhood.[6]

Concerning the occurrence of the blood-pact among the Kota and Yaka-Lali in French Equatorial Africa I have received communications from representatives of the Swedish Missionary Society (Svenska Missionsförbundet) working in these tracts:

Thus one of my informants stated that blood-brotherhood was concluded by the two parties cutting themselves a little above the wrist and then drinking each other's blood. From this moment, it was thought, they were inseparably united. When one of the blood-brothers was away is was the other who took his place in case of sickness, dispute, misfortune, who looked after his house, possessions and village — if the parties were chiefs. All the members of a blood-brother's family, all his relatives, were bound to show the other all honour and obedience; and all people knew that it was indifferent whether the one or the other of the two was at home, or directed work or gave orders.

Concerning the women of the "brothers", it was stated that they tried to keep their women out of the "friendship" for fear that they might otherwise be the occasion of turning the friendship into hatred and disagreement.

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[2] *Johnston,* George Grenfell and the Congo, pp. 112 f, 686 ff.; *Grenfell-Comber,* Explorations p. 363; *Bentley,* Pioneering, II, pp. 71 f.

[3] *Teisserès,* L'échange du sang, p. 17.

[4] *Trilles,* Le totémisme, p. 505, *Id.,* Les Pygmées, p. 500, *Id.,* Chez les Fang, p. 324.

[5] *Pauli,* Am Ogowe, pp. 44 f.

[6] *Bastian,* Afrikanische Reisen, p. 296.

Other forms of this rite also existed. Thus one informant said that the two contracting parties simply scratched the upper side of the thumb until blood appeared between the root of the nail and the first joint of the thumb. Then they waited for some time until the small scratches were healed, met again and showed each other the marks, rejoiced thereat and concluded the pact of permanent friendship. They knew nothing about drinking or sucking each other's blood. We are clearly concerned here with a survival from an earlier blood-pact. A member of the Kota tribe, Ruben Ngousa, told the missionary that there were instances of blood-brotherhood among the Yaka-Lali. Furthermore he said that there had been a man in the hospital since Whitsun this year (1950) whom he knew had entered a blood-pact with another man. Ngousa said that the pact meant that if one died, his blood-brother would inherit a considerable amount from him. While alive, they were to one another as "children of the same mother." There is also an account of how three important chiefs in the neighbourhood of the Kota became blood-brothers, and remained faithful to their pledge throughout their lives. They ate and drank together; the actual transfer of blood took place in the absence of any witch-doctor or onlookers, and the chiefs sucked each other's blood from cuts in their arms.[7]

From a missionary, Rev. S. *Axelsson,* now working in another Swedish Mission (Örebro Missionsförening) in French Equatorial Africa, especially among the Ngili, Sanga-Sanga, Mbimu and Baja, I have received the following interesting account of the way in which a native evangelist made use of a blood-brotherhood: "The custom of concluding an alliance of blood-brotherhood, 'alliance par le sang,' was also widespread in our districts of the Middle Congo. The reason for entering this alliance on various occasions was evidently that it was desired to wipe out old enmities between individuals or clans. Partly, too, — or perhaps primarily — because the parties to it wished to assure themselves of an alliance against common enemies. The ceremony adopted for the conclusion of the alliance was very simple. A cut was made — judging from scars that I have seen, rather a deep cut — on the inside of the left fore-arm, just below the crease of the elbow. The blood was then sucked by the parties direct from each other's arms, while they solemnly promised to love each other and afford each other mutual support for all time and in all circumstances. Such an alliance was considered more binding than natural relationship, which says much among Africans.

I give here a couple of instances from our own district, which I believe to be typical.

Some time about the turn of the century the cruel chief of Matélé, Nyoka, heard that a man from the village of Ikamba had committed adultery with one of his wives. Nyoka is said first to have sent some representatives to negotiate with his rival, in order if possible to settle the matter peaceably. The latter, however, was not inclined for a settlement, and shot down one of the emissaries with an old flint-lock (presumably one of the first fire-arms to find its way to these tracts). Such an insult was of course not to be tolerated by a man like Nyoka — it must be washed out with blood. He assembled all his fighting men for a night attack on the unprepared, sleeping inhabitants of the Ikamba village. According to Pastor Daniel Boukangué, Nyoka's own son, the attack resulted in a terrible massacre — one of the many in Africa's history. The chief of the Ikamba village, who himself escaped with his life, ought naturally to have taken an if possible still more cruel revenge upon Nyoka and his people, but he did not consider himself strong enough to do this. Accordingly, in part in order to 'save his face' and in part to guard against fresh surprises by Nyoka, he suggested that they should conclude blood-brotherhood. Nyoka willingly agreed to this — it was after all more secure, for himself as well as for his people, to have friends than enemies in Ikamba. Moreover, he would in this way be assuring himself of reliable satellites in the event of a conflict with a third party.

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[7] (Letter 10/6 1950) I am indebted to the Rev. Dr. *Efraim Andersson* who has kindly communicated this information to me.

A couple of decades late, the first missionaries from the Örebro Mission Society arrived in Matélé and erected a mission station there, despite Nyoka's resistance, just near the village. Many of Nyoka's subjects very soon became converts, and several of the young christianized among the Matélé men presently began in their turn and in a very simple way to preach the message of Christianity. After a number of years the missionaries sent one of these Matélé boys, Simon-Motike, as an evangelist to Ikamba. The chief ruling at that time in Ikamba was a son of the man who had concluded blood-brotherhood with Nyoka. He now suggested to the evangelist that they should enter into a blood-brotherhood similar to the one concluded between his father and the Motike chief some years earlier. This was agreed to, and the evangelist, who is still working in the same village, has never had reason to regret that he consented to the chief's proposal. In this case, of course, it can scarcely have been that the chief wished to assure himself of any further advantages; rather is it to be presumed that he wanted only to confirm the fact that the good relations between Matélé and Ikamba still obtained. And perhaps, too, he wished to show his own people that he was taking the evangelist and his activities under his patronage.

This custom seems now, like so much else of the Africa of earlier times, to be dying out completely. The modern Africans become 'camarades' in a much more irresponsible fashion; but their comradeship is also much less staunch than was that of the older generation."[8]

The custom of blood-brotherhood only existed among certain clans belonging to the Bumba; not among the Bomitaba and the Bole, where friendship was established merely by exchanging gifts.

But exchange of blood is practised to-day between Bomitaba and the other groups. The ceremony takes place in the presence of seconds, who make small cuts in the forearms of the two concerned, whereupon the blood is either mixed by rubbing the wounds together or each sucks the other's blood. Meanwhile the seconds take manioc twigs, which they break near the eyes, mouth, neck, knees, kidneys, elbows, or hands of the two participants to the accompaniment of a ritual formula, "if you are faithless to the friendship of your brother, your eyes will cease to see, etc.," threatening the part of the body near which the manioc twig was broken. The pact thus concluded binds the blood-brothers to complete mutual aid, and to hold even their wives in common, except the chief one.[9]

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[8] (Letter 18/2 1951).

Among the tribes living around the Alima river, the Furu, Mboshi and Teke, the exchange of blood is little practised, and, according to *Courboin,* occurs only on rare occasions. But he mentions that there is a general custom of choosing "brothers," friends who will give help in all circumstances.[1]

In describing the customs and habits among the savages on the Upper Congo, *Pagels* also discusses the ritual connected with the blood-pact among the Ngata and the adjacent tribes. By this pact, he says, two individuals are so closely united that according to the promises given at the ceremonies all the interests of the one are shared by the other, all the friends and enemies of the one become also the friends and enemies of the other. The one blood-brother is in duty bound to protect the other to the point of death. The women and all the possessions of the one belong also to the other. How scrupulously these promises are kept between the natives was not known to *Pagels;* but he himself had no cause to complain about his two blood-brothers. One of these was a chief, an intriguer and a rascal, with whom he had been obliged to conclude this alliance in order to enjoy peace at the station. Pagels' predecessor at the Equator Station had several times tried in vain to enter into friendly relations with this troublesome chief, but all his attempts had failed owing to the latter's dislike of the whites. But after *Pagels* had been attacked by his warriors, several of whom, however, were killed, the chief himself proposed at the peace-palaver that they should conclude blood-brotherhood. And after this all hostilities towards the men at the station ceased from his side.

Pagels declares that the savages use entire days for the ceremonies connected with the conclusion of the blood-pact. With the whites, however, they were to be made as simple as possible. He gives the following description of the procedure when he went through the ceremony. The chief sat down on his leopard-skins opposite *Pagels'* chair. On the ground between them were laid *Pagels'* revolver, which had been taken to pieces, and the chief's broken spear, as a sign that all hostility between the contracting parties had come to an end. Earth and salt were mixed on a banana-leaf, whereupon one of *Pagels'* native helpers, who at the time was serving as a fetish-man, cut a slight score in *Pagels'* right arm and a similar one in the chief's arm. The wounds were covered with the mixture of earth and salt, which absorbed the blood welling forth. The parties then took each other's hands and laid the cuts on their right arms against each other, at the same time rubbing them gently backwards and forwards so that the blood was mixed. During this ceremony the native serving as fetish-man declared that all hostility between the blood-brothers was for all time impossible, and that the one who broke the sacred law of the blood-pact would never have peace either in this life or the life to come, etc. A palm-leaf was then cut longitudinally down the middle, and the one half of the leaf was hung up in a tree at the station as a proof of the solemn act, the other half being taken for the same purpose to the village of the chief.

Pagels points out that the ceremonies were performed in a slightly different way farther up the river. For example, a goat was killed and the two contracting parties washed each other's faces with the blood. Or after the cuts had been made in their arms, two hen's livers were laid on them to absorb the blood, whereupon each party ate the liver containing the other's blood.

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[9] *Le Bourhis,* Coutumes Bomitaba, pp. 66 f.

[1] *Courboin,* Les populations de l'Alima, p. 655.

The ceremonies thus vary, says *Pagels,* but the significance of the alliance, on the other hand, is always the same.[2]

The custom was also practised by several of the Ngata's neighbours, the Loi, Tumba, Gombe, Kuti, Kundu, and further to the south the Sakata and the Lesa.[3]

From the Ngala we have several statements. Unfortunately, the reports studied are by no means unanimous in their descriptions of this custom. Some assert that only a mixing of blood takes place, others declare that the blood was swallowed. The reports in question will now be briefly considered. *Stanley* concluded this pact with the chief and other potentates "several times over." The rite was as follows. "The shaft of the spear and the stock of the rifle were then scraped on the leaf, a pinch of salt was dropped on the wood, and finally a little dust from the long pod was scraped on the curious mixture. Then our arms were crossed — the white arm over the brown arm — and an incision was made in each; and over the blood were dropped a few grains of the dusty compound, and the white arm was rubbed over the brown arm." Thus an evident mixing of blood. But we must also bear in mind *Stanley*'s aversion to this ceremony as performed correctly.[4]

Yet *Ward* confirms Stanley's version. His report differs from the latter's only as regards the other ingredients. He says that an incision was made in both the right arms just below the elbow. And when the blood was flowing in a tiny stream "the charm-doctor sprinkled powdered chalk and potash on the wounds, delivering the while in rapid tones an appeal to maintain the validity of this contract." The arms of the principals were rubbed together so that the flowing blood intermingled, and they were proclaimed to be "brothers of one blood."[5] (See picture.)

In another work, however, where he also discusses the nearby tribe of the Bangi, *Ward* states that in some tribes "the blood of each party is mixed and placed in a broad leaf, together with a sprinkling of mysterious powder." The leaf is then cut in two, and the two halves have to be consumed by the two persons entering into the blood-bond.[6]

In those passages in his works in which he gives accounts of the Ngala, *Weeks* everywhere states that the blood was swallowed. According to his description of the procedure, a stick called 'ndeko' is procured and carefully scraped. The scrapings are then mixed with salt. The contracting parties clasp each other's right hand with the ndeko between the palms. Some incisions are now made on the arms and the mixture of ndeko-scrapings and salt is rubbed on the cuts. Each of the parties then puts his mouth to the incisions on the other's arm and sucks for a few moments. It seems reasonable to believe that this is the genuine performance

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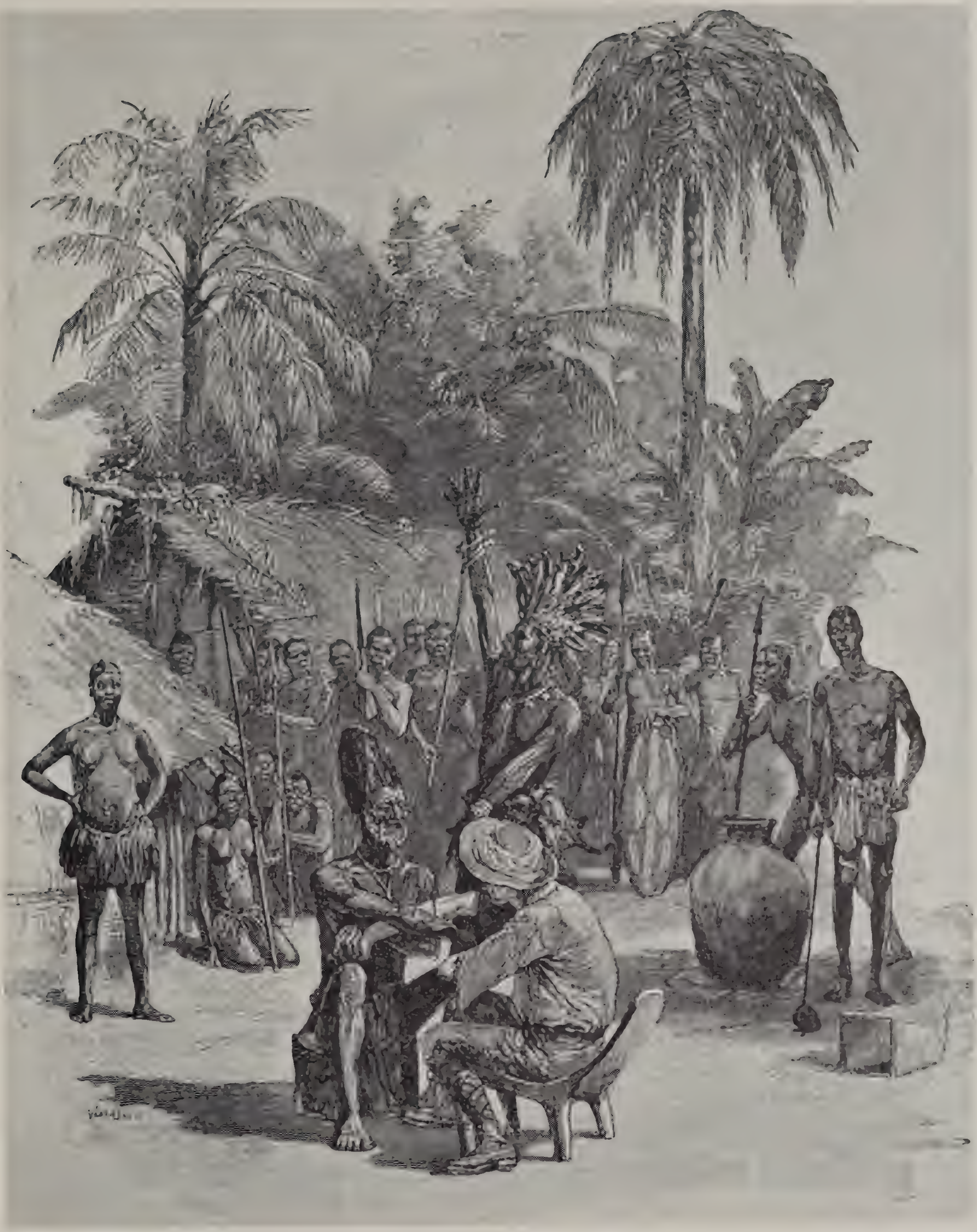
[2] *Möller-Pagels,* Tre år i Kongo, II, pp. 83 f.

[3] *Stanley,* The Congo, II, pp. 68, 38; *Delcommune,* Exploration du Ruki et du lac Matumba, p. 206; *Coquilhat,* Sur le haut Congo, pp. 257, 240; *RC* 1913—14, p. 264; *Dybowsky,* La route, p. 144; Concerning the Sakata, I am indebtet to a Swedish missionary, *B. Sundberg,* who has kindly communicated this information to me.

[4] *Stanley,* The Congo, II, pp. 89 f.

[5] *Ward,* Five years, p. 131, *Id.,* A Voice, p. 249.

[6] *Id.,* Ethnographical Notes, p. 292.



Blood-Brotherhood, Ngala (after H. Ward).

of the rite. *Stanley*'s account refers to a ceremony that was "made for *Stanley*."[7]

Hutereau describes blood-brotherhood among the Foto, an island tribe between the Ngala and the Poto. The cuts were always made on the right arm, which was bound, to make the blood well up. A little salt was applied to the wound, and each man then sucked the other's blood.[8]

Stanley himself entered into blood-brotherhood with the chief of the Poto. "For the fiftieth time," he says, "my poor arm was scarified and my blood shed for the cause of civilization." Between them the two contracting parties held a bamboo-cane, one at each end, while the medicine-man practised his blood-letting art. Here, it would seem, there was only a mixing of blood. *Stanley* does not, at all events, hint at any swallowing of blood.[9] *Parke* states that the mixing of blood took place in connection with a pact in these tracts, which he describes.[1] But in another place we find a different statement by *Stanley* concerning this ceremony among the Poto, where he was evidently only a witness. "Blood-brotherhood," he writes, "was a beastly cannibalistic ceremony with these people, yet much sought after, whether for the satisfaction of their thirst for blood or that it involved an interchange of gifts . . . After an incision was made in each arm, both brothers bent their heads, and the aborigine was observed to suck with the greatest fervour, whether for love of blood or excess of friendship it would be difficult to say."[2]

Wilwerth describes exchange of blood among the same tribe. According to him the blood was usually taken from the chest of each participant, mixed in a banana leaf, and drunk by the two men. The procedure was later simplified: a small incision was made in the arm of each brother-to-be, and a little salt placed on the wound, together with a small piece of wood from the chief's lance or the stock of the white man's rifle. The wounds were then rubbed together, and the ceremony concluded with the customary harangue. If the two participants were native chiefs, they sucked each other's blood.[3]

We meet with various forms of blood-mixing among several tribes to the north up towards Ubangi-Shari. The Gbandi performed the rite in a similar fashion to the Poto, but the final touches were added to the ceremony by pouring over the heads of the two participants the blood of a new-slaughtered fowl.[4]

Among the Bwaka, when two chiefs wished to seal an alliance, they sucked blood from scratches made on each other's hands. The Budja had the same practice, with minor variations.[5]

The custom has been substituted in some cases. Among the Bondjo, for instance, a missionary had to enter 'blood-brotherhood' with the chief, in order to carry on his work there. The chief daubed a little red ochre on his and the missionary's arms, and they rubbed the places together. Gifts were exchanged afterwards, and this appears to have been the main feature of the compact in this case.[6]

Brunache exchanged blood with a native among the Nziri to find later that it was proposed with the idea of getting more presents. Another traveller states that the Nziri and the Sango were very faithful to the oath of blood-brotherhood, which the fetish gods were called upon to witness before everybody. On the evening of the day on which the ceremony took place, the chief who had exchanged blood with a European toured the village, escorted by the witch-doctor armed with a sort of bell. As they marched, the chief called out in a loud voice that the white chief was his friend, and that everyone might sleep calmly in their beds without fear of attack or robbery.[7]

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[7] *Weeks,* Among Congo Cannibals, p. 73, *Id.,* Notes, p. 360.

[8] *Hutereau,* Les Mafoto, p. 149.

[9] *Stanley,* In Darkest, p. 130, *Id.,* The Congo, II, p. 132.

[1] *Parke,* Experiences, p. 60.

[2] *Stanley,* The Congo, II, p. 286.

[3] *Wilwerth,* Coutumes congolaises, p. 151.

[4] *Ib.,* loc. cit.

[5] *De Cocker,* Essai, p. 285.

[6] *LAA,* 1894, p. 91.

When *Dubowski* visited the Bongo, he was obliged to mix blood with the chief in order to reassure him of his good intentions. He received offers of such blood-brotherhood in almost every village, but he refused them, because the pact did not provide any serious advantages; he adds that this exchange of blood was a kind of treaty of but little value, since the chiefs in this region would break such a pact on the slightest excuse. He describes how they sat on the ground facing each other and mixed blood from small incisions in their right arms. They rubbed the wounds together and uttered the word 'déko-déko,' meaning 'friend,' whereupon the witch-doctor laid ashes from a banana leaf on the wounds. The contracting parties then sealed their brotherhood by drinking palm wine.[8]

The Yakoma and the Bongo practised the exchange of blood, and *Burrows* has given the following description of the ceremony of blood-brotherhood which he performed with a Yakoma chief: "A little chief insisted on becoming my blood-brother, and, anxious to see how it was done, I consented. The rite was carried out in the following manner: in the open air, and in the presence of all the assembled chiefs and people, I was seated opposite to my prospective brother. A small incision was made in each of our forearms, half-way between the hand and elbow, from which a little blood oozed. The proper performance would have been for each of us to lick the blood of the other, but on this occasion we decided to dispense with that part of the rite, merely rubbing the cuts one against the other, and thus commingling our blood. When this was done the representative of my "brother" got up and began to beat two pieces of metal together — a knife and a gun-barrel, I think they happened to be — keeping up a monotonous tink, tink, tink, and talking to me as he did so. He recited a sort of commination service, somewhat to the following effect: "If you ever make war on me, if you ever steal from me, if you ever wound me, etc., etc., may you die!" This is a good opportunity for him in case he may want to get anything from you, so his incantation often contains such threats as, "If you do not give me plenty of guns, may you die!" After this, a similar performance was gone through by my representative, whose business it was to nullify my new brother's subtle demands. Finally the compact was sealed by an exchange of small presents."[9]

Vandevliet exchanged blood with a chief of the Kango. Incisions were made in his arm and the chief's with a sharp knife. As soon as the blood began to flow, a little salt was applied to the wounds, and the two men sucked each other's blood. The chief did so with relish, "it seemed that he found the white man's blood not displeasing." He then tried to obtain assistance from his new "brother" for attacking his enemies, the Babwa.[1] Another explorer says that the Kango associated with the exchange of blood the same beliefs as did the Zande. The pact was concluded in the same way and under the same conditions, and the blood-brothers had the same obligations.[2]

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[7] *Brunache,* Le Centre de l'Afrique, p. 85; *Gaillard,* Explorations, p. 235.

[8] *Dubowski,* La route du Tchad, pp. 163 f.

[9] *Burrows,* The Land of the Pigmies, pp. 27 f; Cf. *Girard,* Yakoma et Bongous, p. 85.

Hutereau also describes a form of blood-pact used among the Babwa to put an end to hostilities between families, or village groups, or whole villages. The exchange of blood was supposed to create a degree of relationship equivalent to that between brothers, but as the pact involved not only the two participants but their relations as well, family permission was required for it. The two participants took their places facing one another, among their relations. A friend or relation made a slight cut in the forehead of each, between the eyebrows; they then swallowed a little of each other's blood on a piece of salt, or licked the blood from the other's wound. The pact implied mutual assistance and was backed by powerful sanctions.[3] Among the Babwa, says *Calonne-Beaufaict,* blood-pact rites were performed both for 'special friendship' and for alliances between clans. It constituted an impediment to marriage.[4]

Stanley procured new friends among the Soko when the chiefs of this tribe and his proxy underwent "the scarification of brotherhood," a ceremony which he found particularly disgusting. A pinch of dirty salt was placed on the flowing blood, and this had to be licked.[5]

Frässle worked as missionary among the Soko, Bango, Bombesa and neighbouring tribes, and he mentions that they practised blood-brotherhood. He himself became blood-brother to an old chief in the hope of lightening the heavy work of missionising his tribe.[6]

An explorer who visited the Soko, Ngandu, Lokele and other tribes describes the ritual of blood exchange among them. The two men interlocked the fingers of their right hands. An assistant at the ceremony made a small incision in their hands and applied salt or ashes to the wounds. Among the Soko and the Lokele it was customary to suck the blood from the wounds; farther north they just swallowed the ashes or salt into which the blood soaked; white participants contented themselves with rubbing the wound against that of the chief.[7]

Among the Ngelima and Popoie, a quarrel could be settled by exchange of blood. A small cut was made in the hand of each of the two men concerned, and a little salt rubbed on the cut. The cuts were then held together to mix the blood, or, to do so more effectually, they were sucked. The final touches were given to the new friendship by three times striking together wedge-shaped pieces of iron held in the right hands, whereupon the iron was dropped and the two shook hands. *Chalux* believes that he became an Anioto when he entered blood-brotherhood with the chief of the Popoi. The ceremony included the sacrifice of a hen and a little of its blood was poured on the small cuts in the arms of the two blood-brothers, and it was accompanied by celebrations in the village.[8]

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[1] *Vandevliet,* L'exploration de l'Uelle, p. 131.

[2] *Hutereau,* Les Bakango, p. 343.

[3] *Id.,* Notes sur la vie familiale, p. 90.

[4] *Calonne-Beaufaict, MSI* 10, p. 339.

[5] *Stanley,* In Darkest, I, p. 13, *Id.,* The Congo, II, p. 132; *Jameson,* Story of, p. 75.

[6] *Frässle,* Negerpsyche, pp. 61, *Id.,* Meine Urwaldneger, p. 131.

[7] *Chaltin,* Le District de l'Aruwimi-Uelle, p. 115.

The Bali and Budu also practised blood-brotherhood, states *Bouccin,* both between members of the two tribes and between fellow tribesmen; it often occurred in connection with the institution of Mambela-Anioto. But to judge from his account, it seems as if the blood was mixed on the ground. Another writer also states that an alliance through a blood-pact was required for admittance to membership of the Anioto secret society. *Migeod,* writing in 1923, says that blood-brotherhood was practised among the Bali when a stranger wanted to reside in the tribe. The wrist was cut and the blood exchanged by pressing the cuts together.[9]

From the Bira we have several accounts to choose from. *Stanley* gives a vivid description of the way in which his proxy had to go through a rather animated ceremony when concluding a bloodpact with the chief in Undusuma. A slight incision was made in his arm. The incantations were on this occasion extremely drastic. *Stanley* does not say what was done with the blood, but when quoting his report, *Czekanowski* declares that it was evidently the actual mixing of the blood that was here the essential feature. *Stuhlmann,* who describes the performance of a blood pact from the same quarter, states that the cuts were made in the forearms of the contractees, who then rubbed their wounds together to mix their blood. The same traveller relates that among the subordinate tribe of the Bira-Djoko, belonging to the Mbuba, the ceremony took the same course. The parties to the pact sat on a tree-trunk and rubbed the bleeding cuts on their forearms against each other, after which salt was eaten by the two principals. There was no rubbing of salt into the wounds such as is described in connection with other tribes.[1]

The drinking of blood is on the other hand the prevailing custom among the (Ma) Ngbetu. *Casati* relates that after cutting themselves in the arm the parties sucked up each other's blood. The same procedure is endorsed by other writers. *Schweinfurth* writes that his headman "drank" blood with a chief of the (Ma) Ngbetu and called himself his brother. A more detailed though somewhat diverging description of the ceremony in this region is given by *Junker.* He himself entered into blood-brotherhood with the ruler of the (Ma) Ngbety, Mambangá (see picture). The contractees sat opposite each other. According to *Junker,* the cuts were not made in the arm, as described by the above-mentioned travellers, but in the region of the heart. Blood was squeezed out and collected on pieces of sugar-cane by the parties, who then chewed the blood-stained fibres and spat, half blowing, half spewing at each other, sometimes at the cut in the region of the heart, sometimes the nape of the neck. Then followed the usual oaths and assurances of absolute loyalty. *Hutereau* states on the other hand that among the (Ma) Ngbetu the incision was always made in the chest and the blood taken with a little salt; among the Medje the men first shook hands

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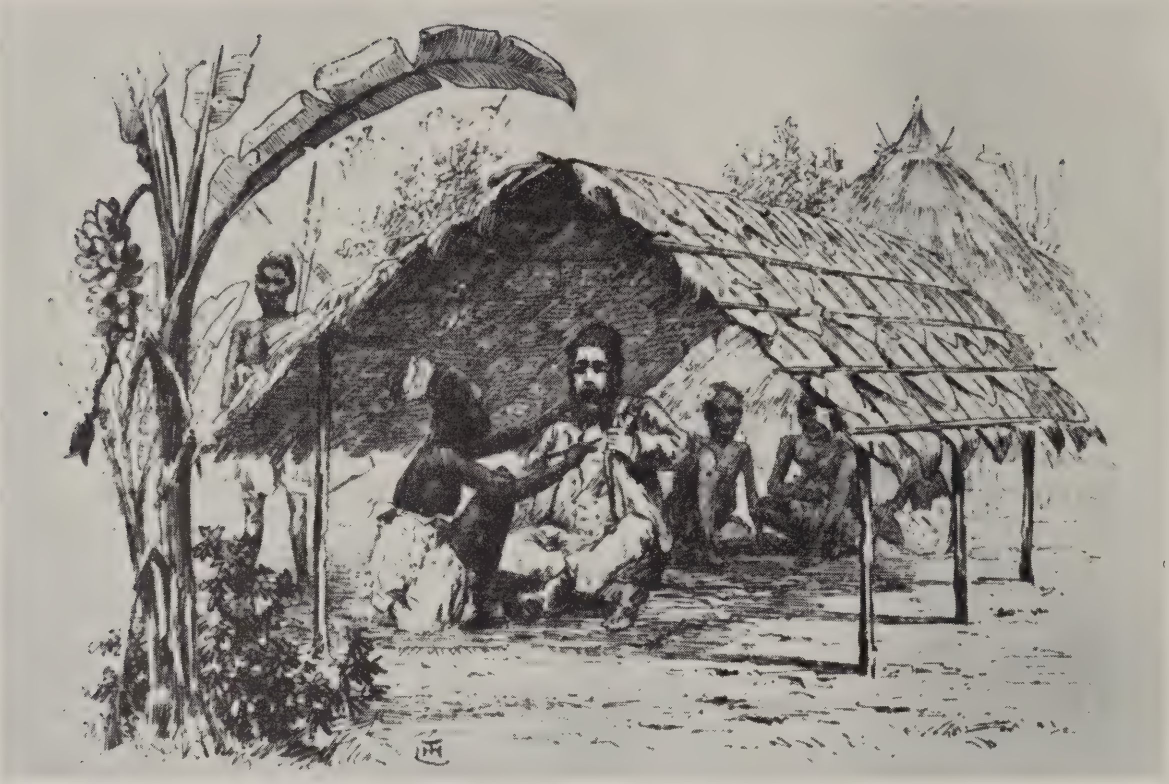
[8] *Federspiel,* Wie es im Congostaat zugeht, pp. 57 f; *Chalux,* Un an au Congo, pp. 615 f; Cf. *Bartelot,* Journal, p. 98, 146.

[9] *Bouccin,* Les Babali, pp. 30 f.; *Moeller,* Anioto et Mambela, p. 58; *Migeod,* Across, p. 193.

[1] *Stanley,* In Darkest, pp. 360 f., *Czekanowski,* Forschungen, II, p. 354., *Stuhlmann,* Mit Emin, pp. 391, 426.



Junker is made a blood-brother of Mambangá, the (Ma)Ngbetu chief.

and the incision was made in the chest or arm, the blood being taken on a piece of sugar cane. In both tribes blood-brothers extended the widest hospitality to one another, and if one came on a visit to the other, he had a woman placed at his disposal as temporary wife during the period of his stay. *Czekanowski* suggests that blood-brotherhood ceased to be important among the (Ma) Ngbetu, except as a feature of external politics, when the tribe came under a strong chieftainship.[2]

The exchange of blood among the neighbouring Barambo takes place by rubbing together small cuts, usually in the arm and "ils sont dès lors frères de sang et se donnent réciproquement un cadeau." *Nys* states that this bond is entered into by two natives "qui ont de la sympathie l'un pour l'autre."[3]

From another neighbouring tribe, the Bangba, *Schweinfurth* relates that he was obliged to contract a treaty offensive and defensive with the natives, and nothing sufficed for this but a mutual interchange of blood. The circumstance led him for the first time to become a witness of this custom. The words of the pledge was emphatic, "in peace we will hold together; in war we will be a mutual defence."[4]

Parke has given a detailed description of the conclusion of a blood-pact among the Amba. Here we find salt being mixed in the

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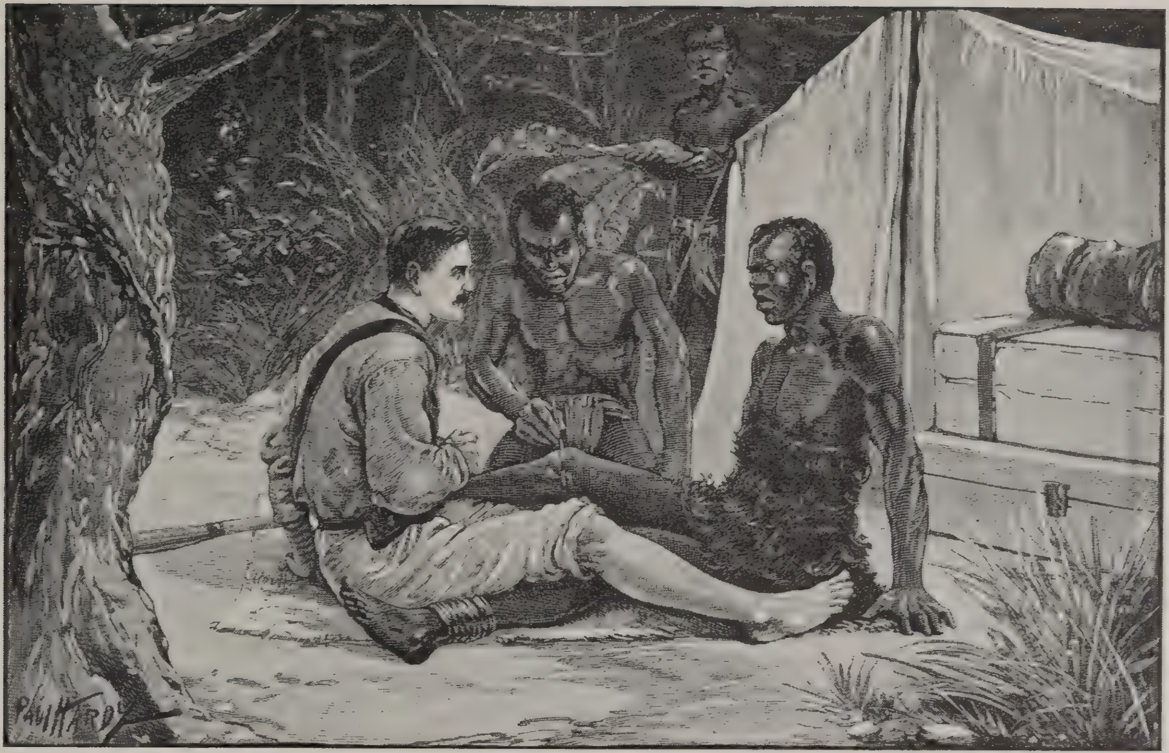
[2] *Casati,* Zehn Jahre, I, pp. 204 f.; *Van Overbergh-de Jonghe,* Les Mangbetu, p. 335; *Schweinfurth,* Im Herzen von Afrika, II, p. 49; *Junker,* Reisen, p. 500; *Hutereau,* La vie familiale, p. 68; *Czekanowski,* op. cit. p. 153; *Hassan,* Die Wahrheit, pp. 64 ff.

[3] *Nys,* Chez les Abarambos, p. 129.

[4] *Schweinfurth,* op. cit. I, p. 571.



Parke is made a blood-brother of an Amba chief.

incisions. *Parke* writes that "the ceremony consisted in sitting down on the ground, face to face, with extended legs—my right leg was placed over his (the chief's) left, and his right over my left (see illustration). Murabo then incised us—two small cuts over the knee in each case. He next put a little salt into the wounds of each, then took a leaf, on which he removed some of the native's blood to rub on my wounds, and vice versa. During the performance, he made signs like a conjuror, and uttered several mysterious sentences." After this, gifts were exchanged, though here, according to the account, the white man was cheated.

According to *Hutereau,* the Pygmies and Pygmoids have adopted from tribes with whom they have come into contact the custom of exchanging blood to establish artificial relationship. The exchange is accomplished by rubbing together two cuts, or by swallowing each other's blood on a piece of salt or sugar cane.[6]

Schebesta also states that blood-brotherhood among the Bambuti is a custom borrowed from the Negroes. It is noteworthy that he associates the ritual with the initiation ceremonies, *kare,* among them: "Das *Karetum* wurzelt in der heiligen Sitte der Blutsbrüderschaft."[7]

Schumacher gives an account of blood-brotherhood among the Kivu Pygmies. He says that it is held in high esteem among the eastern group, and that the Batva enter into

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[5] *Parke,* Experiences, p. 429; Cf. *Czekanowski,* op. cit. p. 474.

[6] *Hutereau,* op. cit. p. 3.

[7] *Schebesta,* Die Bambuti-Pygmäen, II, pp. 538, 485 ff.

blood-brotherhood both among themselves and with the Bantu. The express purpose of the contract is mutual aid. *Schumacher* states that a man cannot deny his blood-brother any assistance the latter may ask of him, although access to wives is not here a feature of brotherly hospitality. The obligations are observed under the fear of magic retribution for any transgression, and the bond thus created is regarded as stronger than that of common parentage. The contract is sealed by each man making a small cut in the pit of the other's stomach, whereupon he takes a little blood on his knife and smears it on his tongue. This is accompanied by an imprecation about the perils of breaking the contract and praise of it as preferable to mere relationship through the same mother.[8]

Among the Pygmies of the western group the blood is taken from the chest and mixed with beer or water. Each takes a drink of the mixture to seal their friendship. The obligations of the pact and the consequences of breaking it are similar for both groups. A variant of the ceremony is used for blood-brotherhood between the Pygmy chiefs and neighbouring chiefs; the only difference is that the blood is taken up on a piece of salt.[9]

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[8] *Schumacher,* Die Kivu-Pygmäen II, pp. 230 f.

[9] *Id.,* Die Kivu-Pygmäen, I, pp. 317, 351.

Eastern and Central Sudan, the Cameroons and North-Western Africa

Let us commence with the Nilotes. Among the Lango, writes *Driberg,* blood-brotherhood as an institution is "a local ceremony of comparatively recent introduction." He stresses that membership of the clan is under no circumstances permitted to outsiders, but this rule may be abrogated in particular cases by the conclusion of blood-brotherhood. The procedure for the entering of this alliance is in complete conformity with that obtaining among the Nyoro, says *Driberg.* He further points out that the appearance of the coffee-bean as the means of inoculation provides clear evidence that the custom was imported, for "the coffee-tree is not found in Lango." According to Driberg's description of the method, the incision is here made above the appendices of the contracting parties, each of whom then takes one of the two beans found in one pod of the coffee-tree. The bean is placed on the wounds and then transferred to the right hand of the other party, who swallows it. Should coffee-beans not be obtainable, the women of the contracting parties cook some porridge on the evening of the previous day and let it stand over-night. The following morning the principals "shape it into the semblance of coffee-beans and performed the ceremony in the same way." It is believed that if either of the contractees should betray his blood-brotherhood, his stomach "would swell up and burst, and he and all his relations would die." The ceremony is referred to locally as *mato remo* (to drink blood); but even on the Nile bank it is not generally observed, and it is rather considered as "an eccentricity of a few philo-Bantu."[1]

Hayley, though he did not himself witness the ceremony among the Lango, was given information about it at Ngai in Atura. *Driberg* found the practice of blood-brotherhood being carried on in north-west Lango. *Hayley* declares that there are three methods for the performance of the rite. There is in this part of Lango no inoculation with the coffee-bean. He gives the following descriptions of the rite and its consequences.

"... 1. A cut is made in each man's fore-arm. He puts his finger to his partner's cut and then licks the blood off.

2. They take an arm-bracelet of brass wire and tug at it until it breaks. Each man then keeps his half of the bracelet.

3. They break a flying termite *(ngwen)* in half, and each man eats his half."

If either of the partners should become ill or die after the ceremony, *Hayley* continues, a like fate will overtake the other. The ceremony is in his opinion an importation from the west, and it is nowadays, according to his informants, not at all popular. But if two men are so attached to each other that life without the other "would be intolerable, they may even in these days perform the ceremony." If the respective families hear of it, they order a dissolution of the bond. The dissolution is performed as follows. A small grass hut is built in the nilotic style, the blood-brothers go inside and the entrance is blocked up. They then make two holes in the wall and creep out through these separate exits. The ceremony may also be performed by women. The clan disapproves of the ceremony, says *Hayley,* because "it affects in like manner the classificatory Clan brothers of the two friends."[2]

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[1] *Driberg,* The Lango, p. 192.

The two participants sucked each other's blood in the ceremony of blood-brotherhood which *Baker* had to undergo, a ceremony to which chiefs of the Lango and the Miro were summoned. The European explorer says that it was a disgusting performance, but absolutely necessary for the success of the expedition.[3]

We have already mentioned that a dissolution of the bond was possible among the Lango. Another instance of the annulling of blood-brotherhood is recounted from the Lango expedition of 1911 against a band of Sudanese mutineers and their Lango allies. Some chiefs said that they did not dare to help the expedition owing to their blood-brotherhood with the mutineers. "Therefore, a sufficiently ridiculous ceremony had to be gone through to free their consciences. Dr. Bagshawe, with due formalities, injected a dose of apomorphia into the cicatrix of the incision made in the blood-brotherhood rites. This made the patients violently sick in about five minutes." A few nauseous draughts afterwards finally satisfied them that the spell was broken.[4]

From the Lur, *Gessi Pasha* reports that after he had given the chief a number of presents the latter suggested that "we should exchange our blood." The offer was advantageous for the traveller, and when he had overcome his disgust at the ceremony he accepted the proposal. He states that among the tribes of the Upper Nile the method of exchanging blood was as follows. The two friends linked their arms "as in the Freundschaftstrinken of the Northern Germans," and in this position they mutually exchanged blood from a small wound in the inner side of the arm.[5]

J. P. Crazzolara, working as missionary among the Madi, writes that the Madi do not appear to practise blood-brotherhood, but that the Lur and Acoli practised it in former times. Two friends would meet, and *kwon (kwen),* cooked flour, polenta, would be prepared; each of them made a small incision on his chest, pinched off a mouthful of *kwon*, touched the blood with it and offered it to the other. Sheep or something of the sort were afterwards killed in the respective villages, and the new friendship celebrated. According to public opinion, the two were bound to help each other against enemies or in time of public calamity.[6] In a later letter, *Crazzolara* says that a Lur tribesman said to him that a man could not marry his blood-brother's sister. He further states that the blood could be taken from the upper arm.[7]

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[2] *Hayley,* The Anatomy of Lango Religion, pp. 105 f.

[3] *Baker,* Ismalïa, II, pp. 374 ff.

[4] *Burne,* How to annul "Blood-brotherhood", p. 430.

[5] *Gessi Pasha,* Seven years in the Sudan, p. 109; Cf. *Emin Pascha,* Die Tagebücher, IV, p. 90.

[6] (Letter 4/11, 1951).

[7] (Letter 8/12, 1951).

Vanneste states that the blood was taken from the chest.[8]

It is mentioned above that the Acoli had this custom. Dr. *Girling*, who has carried out ethnological researches among this people, has kindly given me the following information:

"It is, I think, quite certain that the tradition of forming blood-brotherhood between individuals and groups has existed in the Acholi for a very long time. I cannot say however whether the custom is native to the Acholi, or adopted from one of the peoples with whom they have been in contact: Madi, Bunyore, Baganda, Karamojong, Alur, Lugbara, Lango, etc. It is clear that it was being done long before the first contact with Arabs or Europeans.

I have heard of several cases and could if you wished give full details of the persons and groups who have been reported to me as doing it.

1. Individuals: It was sometimes done between people who were trading with another group, e.g. Baganda, Bunyoro, or Lango with the Acholi, or an Acholi going into the country of the surrounding peoples.

I have also heard of a man entering a blood relationship with his wife. This was said to be with the purpose of preventing her being unfaithful with other members of his clan group, and perhaps also to ensure that she would not be inherited by one of them after his death.

2. Groups: At the time when the present Acholi tribal complex was in process of formation, groups of peoples (that is groups of clans or extended families) were coming to settle in what is now the Acholi District. They sometimes met people who had already settled, i.e. who had come there before, (some of them may have been autochthonous, but this is a point on which I am not yet clear). When this happened the two groups sometimes entered into blood-brotherhood. The ceremony was performed, and thereafter the two groups could not intermarry.

3. The ceremony: As reported to me, the way in which it was done seems to have varied. I have not studied the question in sufficient detail to be able to offer any explanation of the variations. All, of course, involved the exchange of blood. Sometimes it was done directly in the way you describe by sucking the blood of the other person's hand. At other times an incision was made in the breast, near the left nipple, and either a piece of millet bread, a coffee berry or some other article of food was dipped in the blood and eaten by the respective partners in the brotherhood.

I have never seen it done, although it is said that it still happens occasionally, so I am afraid that I cannot tell you more about the actual ceremony."[9]

It is of interest in this connection that in the Acoli language the word for blood is *reèmu*, and that this word is used in expressions referring to friendship. Thus, for instance, *màkò reèmù* ki means 'to make friends with'; and *dág reèmu* means 'he rejects friendship.'[1]

As regards the northern Nilotes, *Crazzolara* says that he doubts whether the Shilluk or the Nuer have the custom.[2] But the Dinka do have it. Dr. *R. G. Lienhardt*, who has done ethnological work among the Dinka, has been kind enough to provide me with the following information about the custom as practised there. He writes:

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[8] *Vanneste*, Legenden, pp. 192 f.

[9] (Letter 17/4, 1950).

[1] *Crazzolara*, A Study of the Acooli Language, pp. 375 f.

[2] (Letter 4/11, 1951).

"Very occasionally, I think, two Dinka young men do made incisions in the upper or lower arm, mix a little of their blood and swallow a little. After this, they do not marry each other's sisters, nor do their children intermarry for one generation. They are obliged to help each other, if required, with cattle in marriage, though this only amounts to the occasional beast and is not like the regular almost legal obligations of close kin. Similarly, if either of them has quarrelled with his own kin, on the mother's or father's side, with whom he has been resident, he may move to his friends home and receive help from him or settle with his kin. I believe that the Dinka think of this sort of compact — I have never come across a case — as taking place rather between young men from fairly distant parts of the country, with whom they have for some reason been thrown together. This is likely, since a Dinka can trace some sort of kinship relationship with anyone in his immediate neighbourhood. It is said that any man who makes such a compact and then quarrels seriously with his blood-brother, spoiling the friendship, will die. People often quarrel seriously with their own paternal kin, and do not expect to die of it, so in a way the blood-brotherhood is more powerful than real relationship as children of one father, perhaps because, unlike agnatic kinship, it is voluntary. I am sorry that I cannot at the moment remember what happens among the Shilluk and Nuer, but much the same thing is said to take place among the Bongo, who of course are not Nilotics, and the Sudanese Arabs."[3]

We meet with two kinds of blood-pact among the Nuba. One called *tossul* was used to establish blood-brotherhood between different chiefs and their families and descendants. *Nadel* describes the procedure: "Old men from each group would kill the animals, catch the blood in a gourd, mix it with a little ochre, and smear the blood on their knees and foreheads. Afterwards the two groups would take the exchanged animals to eat them on their way home, some distance from their settlements. From now on they must offer each other hospitality and protect each other's lives. Should this blood-pact be broken, the whole families would die."[4] This pact could also be extended to whole groups.

Nadel also mentions an Arab form of blood-pact, called *wuli* (blood), which was concluded between the chief of the Nyima and a chief of the Hawazma Arabs. This blood-pact entailed intermarriage between the two tribes, contrary to the actual practice of the Nyima. However, the intermarriage was one-sided, as the Nyima men declined to marry Arab wives; the Arab women were considered less pliable, refusing to adopt the ways of their new families and tribe.[5]

With regard to the Hassanie, *Domville-Fife* says that they are believed to practise blood-brotherhood. "This strange cult, is undoubtedly a form of secret society, whereby two members are bound to each other and to the rest of the tribe by a considerable transfusion of blood . . ."[6]

Descriptions of the custom of blood-brotherhood among other tribes in the eastern

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[3] (Letter 5/12 1949).

[4] *Nadel,* The Nuba, pp. 453 f.

[5] *Ib.,* pp. 395, 454 n. He also mentions a blood brothership between a bridegroom and his 'best man', pp. 394 f; *Sagar,* Notes, p. 155, says that the mixing of blood obtained from cuts in the arms is practised between Nuba of different *jebels.*

[6] *Domville-Fife,* Savage Life, pp. 56 f.

Sudan, for instance the Ndogo[7] and the Bongo, might be quoted, but nowhere has it been described so fully as in Prof. *Evans-Pritchard's* "Zande Blood-brotherhood."[8] He says that the custom is of frequent occurrence among the members of this tribe. A common form of address among them is *bakurëmi* (my blood-brother), which, besides its proper use between persons who have drunk one another's blood, is used between their kin and even as a familiar courtesy between people quite unrelated. In pre-European days, when blood-pacts were taken much more seriously than they are to-day, it was necessary for a man to consult his elder relatives before entering such a relationship, as it bound his kin as well as himself. Nowadays the custom has lost a great deal of its former strict observance. Usually, however, a young man does show his respect for his elders by consulting them beforehand. He also consults the oracle about the success of a proposed pact.

As regards the motives for entering a blood-pact and the manner in which blood is exchanged, we will continue in *Evans-Pritchard's* own words:

"Men may enter into a pact for many reasons. In my experience the motive has generally been to cement already existing bonds of comradeship by giving them a concrete organized form which is backed by sanctions. Friends will assist each other out of sentiment, but little social compulsion attaches to it. There is a pattern of behaviour between friends which is supported by social precept, but this pattern is faint. We may contrast its indistinctness with the clear prominent lines of the behaviour patterns which regulate behaviour between kin. Blood-brotherhood gives to the vague sentiment of friendship, with its indefinite obligations, a status comparable to that of close kin relationship. But, though I have observed that it is often friends of long standing who exchange blood with one another, I do not think that they are ever motivated by purely sentimental reasons. Each knows that the other can assist him in a number of ways. Some advantages which will accrue from the pact are quite specific: thus one partner possess powerful medicines with which he can supply the other, who may be an efficient smith or hunter so that he can make return in iron or meat.

Blood is often exchanged solely for commercial purposes. A man who is travelling in foreign countries will make blood-brotherhood with a native, who thereby becomes responsible for his safety since this is explicitly stated in the clauses of the pact. When a man is travelling through a strange district of his own country he will establish a contact which will ensure his safety by finding some one of his clan, or of his mother's clan, to whom he can introduce himself as a kinsman. In a foreign country this is impossible, and here blood-brotherhood takes the place of blood relationship as the traveller's passport. In old days the most frequent use of this kind of passport was to give protection to parties of Azande which sought to gather a magic wood, called *benge,* which is used for oracle consultations. This wood grows only in hostile regions occupied by such peoples as the Mangbetu and Abarambo, and before European occupation of the country its collection was a hazardous undertaking, though risks were considerably lessened by an exchange of blood with one of the natives of the country who, in return for various presents, conducted the travellers to the end of their journey. Exchange of blood in such situations sacralizes and endows with sanctions a politico-economic transaction. As the union of blood-brotherhood is considered sacred by a number of adjacent tribes, it provides machinery through which trade can be carried on with a minimum assurance of protection for strangers. It is also common for men to make a blood-pact for purposes of trade in which there is no high degree of personal danger. A man living in the heart of Zande country finds difficulty in acquiring various luxuries which are plentiful in distant districts. Thus Azande sometimes make blood-brotherhood with the semi-Zandeized Mbegumba and Mberidi of the extreme north with the purpose of obtaining dried meats and vegetable oils. At the time of the year when these articles of food are abundant the Zande pays his blood-brother a visit and asks him for presents of oil and dried meats. He may bring some articles with him as return gifts or he may just demand them *gine kure,* 'in the path of blood.' In any case his blood-brother will have anticipated the visit and will have reserved part of his surplus oil and flesh to meet the occasion. When he feels inclined, the northerner will pay a visit to the centre of Zande country where he will enjoy the hospitality of his blood-brother from whose home he will return laden with one or two spears or some bark-cloth, or other such articles which are difficult to obtain in his far-off district. In travelling in foreign country blood-brotherhood gives protection. In seeking an alliance with a man living in a distant part of Zandeland it is an assured base and favoured treatment in economic exchange which is aimed at.

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[7] *Santandrea,* Il gruppo Ndogo, p. 276.

[8] *Evans-Pritchard,* Zande Blood-brotherhood, AF 6, pp. 369 ff.

Such exchanges of blood are, however, exceptional. Blood-brotherhood is generally made between neighbours, and while desire for protections and for favoured economic conditions are both factors in any pact, they are only two among other factors which form a complicated mesh of motives, varying with each individual case, as will be evident when I enumerate the clauses of a pact and describe how it works.

I have never come across an instance of a man making blood-brotherhood with a woman, though I have been told that rare alliances have been made between a man and a much loved and trusted wife. This is the only situation in which a pact between members of opposite sexes could occur since all other situations would involve an alliance either with someone else's wife, which would be an adulterous union, or with a female relative, which would be absurd, since they are already united by ties of kinship. It is necessary to say also that it is very seldom that chiefs exchange blood with commoners, and hence it is seldom that they enter into an alliance of blood-brotherhood at all, since Zande society is divided into only two classes, commoners and chiefs, and the chiefs all belong to one clan and hence are of the same the same kin. A man cannot exchange blood with his own kin. I do not doubt that alliances between sons of chiefs and commoners occur, though I have not observed them. On the other hand, I have been told of several chiefs of two and three generations ago who made blood covenants with commoner subjects. It is, however, said that the powerful chief Gbudwe, who ruled over a vast area in the Sudan, avoided all such entanglements, and I do not know of any important princes among his sons who departed from this tradition. The reason for their abstinence is obvious and clearly expressed by Azande themselves. Chiefs have to settle cases and dispense justice and direct administration. An alliance of blood would militate against the fairness of their judgements and paralyse their execution. Put concisely, the position is this: the behaviour pattern between blood-brothers (social familiarity and mutual assistance) is incompatible with the behaviour pattern between commoners and chiefs (respect and obligations on the one hand and authority and privilege on the other). Moreover, many clauses of a blood-pact are especially framed with the purpose of circumventing justice, as will be seen in the spells which follow. It is well known to Azande that blood-brotherhood counts little with chiefs when it clashes with their personal and political aims, and there are illustrative cases which tell how chiefs have killed persons to whom they stood as blood-brothers, i.e. people belonging to clans with members of which a chief or some of his relatives have made a covenant of blood. The evidence suggests that in past times when the rule of chiefs was less autocratic and centralized than during the last two generations they made blood pacts with their subjects more frequently than when their political powers developed into untempered despotism.

I will now describe the manner in which blood is exchanged to-day as I have been told about the ceremony, have witnessed it, and have participated in it. Two men decide informally that they will meet on a certain day in the homestead of one of them and will there perform the ceremony. Azande intensely dislike people knowing about their affairs, however innocent they may be, and the participants will inform only their closest relatives and friends about the proposed pact and they will try to avoid publicity in its ritual enactment. Slight preparation is needed, and when you enter the homestead you will see its daily work going on in uninterrupted routine, cooking, carrying of water, sweeping, and the dozen other tasks which women have to perform in order to maintain a homestead in working order. You will certainly find the men under the shelter of a granary if the sun is well up, or round a fire in the center of the homestead if it is early morning or towards evening. Natives soon forget the presence of an often seen ethnologist and gossip freely among themselves upon every sort of subject. Sometimes the conversation will turn to blood-brotherhood, but you will not receive the impression that their minds are riveted on the ceremony which is about to take place, and you will observe this matter-of-fact attitude running cheek-by-jowl with ritual throughout the ceremony. It is relevant to mention that most Zande magical and religious ceremonies which I have witnessed are remarkable for the absence of that spiritual frame of mind which we Europeans consider appropriate to ritual events. On such occasions the Zande's behaviour, outside the stereotyped ritual acts of the ceremony, can in no way be thought of as sacred.

However, the men have come together for a special purpose and soon one of them will remark, 'Well, we had better get our business done,' and his partner will assent and ask if everything is ready. In all probability nothing is ready. The owner of the homestead sends some one to cut some pieces of *banga* wood, or tells his little son to run and ask his mother for a few ground-nuts, and he shouts to his wife to bring some salt. The men continue to sit and talk about local and court news whilst the boy returns with ground-nuts and the wife brings salt and whilst a slight incision is made on the arms or chests of the two partners to the pact so that a few drops of blood ooze out. If the two men have brought relatives with them, these make the incisions and conduct the whole ceremony, but if they prefer to do so the partners make the incisions and conduct the rites themselves. One partner takes a small rectangular piece of *banga* wood, or several ground-nuts, and soaks them in the blood which oozes from the body of the other. Often the two men consume each other's blood at the same time, each taking some ground-nuts, rubbing them in blood, and dipping them in salt. They eat the nuts with exaggerated relish. When the ground-nuts are used they consume nut and blood together, but when *banga* wood is used they chew the wood into pulp which they spit out after swallowing blood, salt, and wood juices.

One of the men, or his second, commences to address his blood in the body of the other and as he does so the hum of conversation ceases and all pay attention to what is being said. There are two recognized modes of action which may be employed by the speaker when addressing the blood. He takes some twisted *bingha* grass (or a piece of cord made from the bast of the *dakpwa* tree) and, standing behind his blood-brother, holds it with one hand in his hair while with the other hand he twists the other end of the cord round and round on top of his head, uttering a spell meanwhile. This dramatized action not only accompanies the spell, but is appropriate to its words. The address consists of a number of clauses, some of which refer to actions on the part of a blood-brother which will bring upon him vengeance of the blood, and others to actions which will absolve him from vengeance. When a man wrongs his blood-brother the blood is thought of as getting a grip on his vitals, so the former set of clauses are accompanied by a twisting of the cord in his hair. When a man assists his blood-brother the blood is thought of as loosening its grip, so as the latter set of clauses are spoken the knot, into which the cord has been wound, is untwisted. Instead of using a cord, the speaker sometimes takes the two knives with which incisions have been made and, standing in front of his seated blood-brother, beats them together over his head. Apparently the object of this action is to draw and keep the attention of the blood to what is being said. Whether the speaker uses the cord method or the knives method of accompanying his speech, he keeps up his action with these objects during the entire time in which he addresses the blood, a period of from five to ten minutes.

In the following paragraphs I give a verbatim account of what is said to the blood when it is addressed by each partner or by their seconds. It must be understood in this paper that when I speak of one of the partners acting in the rites his place may be taken by a second who must be a relative of his. The addresses which I give here are texts which I took down from informants. The spell uttered by the first partner is a single text, whereas in the second spell I have combined in one address several textual fragments. As I have heard four such addresses pronounced, I can guarantee that my texts give an adequate summary of what is said at these ceremonies. I have slightly simplified the original texts in respect to personal pronouns, since an English translation tends to become unintelligible when there is constant change from sentence to sentence in the object addressed, sometimes the blood-brother being addressed directly as 'you,' while at other times the blood is adressed as 'you' and the blood-brother is referred to as 'he.'

'You are blood,' he says, 'which we exchange with the clan of the Akowe. If you see some one struggling with your blood-brother and you run and attack him also and strike him violently, may you not recover from the vengeance of the blood. If a child of mine is in danger of the law and he flies and hides in your hut and you give him away so that he gets into trouble, may you die from the blood. If I come to your house, my blood-brother, and I say to you that I have come to ask you for the gift of a spear and you go into your hut and see a spear there but do not give it to me, you will die from the blood. But if your spears are of unbeaten iron, the property of others, marriage spears, and you send me away without them, may you not die from vengeance of the blood. May the blood untwist itself from you with respect to unbeaten iron.

If I pay you a visit and you have beer in your hut and you do not draw it for me, but let me sit near it and then return home with this insult, may vengeance of the blood overtake you. If you see one of our wives on a path and you hear that it is the wife of those men with whom you have exchanged blood and you say to her "Friend, we will drink a gourdful," and then you make advances to the wife of your blood-brother, may you not escape vengeance of the blood. If I pay you a visit and you possess some feast spears, you must not refuse me a gift. If you refuse me those spears which are yours to exchange, may you not escape vengeance of the blood. If you kill an animal and we come and cut *bingba* grass and bind it round the beast's head and then you come and take it from us, may you die from the blood, for the head of an animal belongs to the blood. When you have been on an expedition to collect *benge* and I come and say to you "My blood-brother, I have come to ask you to break off a little *benge* for me" and instead of giving me your good *benge* which you have gathered yourself you just give me the remains of some old *benge,* whilst all the time I am saying to myself "My blood-brother has given me good new *benge,*" may you not escape the blood's vengeance. When I am pursued by avengers and I fly to my blood-brother and say to him, "I have come to ask you to give me spears since vengeance is hard on my heels" and you look at your spears and send me away empty-handed, may you die from the blood. If I come to your homestead and I see a girl there, who is your daughter, and betrothed to none, and I ask you for her hand in marriage and you reply to me in an off-hand manner "Ai! you cannot marry her, she is betrothed," whereas as a matter of fact no one has espoused her and you are just deceiving me, then you will die from the blood.

'Blood, I address you; if his daughter is a man's wife, he need not give her to me in marriage; blood, do not kill my blood-brother on account of this, but entirely loosen yourself from him with respect to his daughter who is a man's wife. If we commit adultery with a woman of yours, do not kill us, but rather say "Ai! we must not kill our blood-brother." Instead we will pay you compensation in spears and you must accept them to escape vengeance from the blood. If you do me ill, may the blood pursue all your wives, may it leap in their abdomens, let them not give birth properly. If the chief sends out a patrol to seize me and I escape from it and fly away and hide in your hut and you rescue me by closing the door after me, you will recover from the blood. If you give me away to the chief's patrol, then you will die from the blood. May not your wives cut meat with a knife and may not your relatives eat at the mouth of iron. Rather let all your wives cut their meat with a firelog and let this be an antidote to the blood by which you may escape its vengeance. May none of your wives cut grass with a knife. When they arrange their grinding-stones in position may it drag them in hernia, may vengeance of the stone seize them on their knees, elbows, backs of necks, and tops of heads.'

When one of the two partners has finished his address he sits down and the other rises and commences a similar speech: 'You are blood which we exchange with you. If you do me an injury, may you die from the blood. If you commit adultery with our wives or make advances to them, may you all perish, your fathers, your mothers, your mother's elder sisters, your mother's brothers, and all your kin will die. If there is beer in your house and you let me go away without partaking of it, your relatives will all perish. If I ask you for a spear and though you possess one you send me away empty-handed, may you not recover from the blood and may all your clan die. If your daughter is espoused to no one and I come to ask for her hand in marriage and you refuse to give me her hand in marriage, may you die from the blood, may all of your kin perish. But may you not die in respect to your daughter who is espoused. If you speak ill of me to the chiefs, may you die.

'My blood-brother, we exchange blood with you, it is blood which we exchange. If you refuse me spears, iron, hens, beer, heads of animals, you will die from the blood. If you give me any fine gift that I ask of you when I come to your house and you cook porridge and give it to me in the path of blood, may you not die from the blood.'

If either of the two partners wants any special gift, he will mention it in his address to his blood. Thus when a Zande makes blood-brotherhood with a foreigner to facilitate his journey to collect *benge* he will state exactly what he wants from his blood-brother, namely that he is to act as a guide, protector, and surety for the party of travellers, while the foreigner, on his part, will mention in his spell various objects of wealth which he knows Azande bring with them on such journeys for purposes of exchange. When two Azande are exchanging blood also they may mention some gift of value which they require from their blood-brothers. The ceremony concludes with a preliminary exchange of gifts. Each party throws down a gift, generally a large knife, which is taken by the party opposite. This is the concluding act of the rites."[9]

Evans-Pritchard points out that the blood-brotherhood was subject to considerable variation in the order and composition of its rites. He twice witnessed the ceremony among the Zande and he was surprised to note how different were the ways in which it was carried out on each occasion. Besides these variations ocurring in one area, there also appeared to be regional differences: "Thus Calonne-Beaufaict, speaking of the Azande of the Belgian Congo, says that one of the men spits on the forehead, the breast, the nape of the neck, the hands clasped in his own, and on the feet of his friend who returns this act of politeness. Gayer-Anderson says that the Azande of the Meridi district of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan incise each other's foreheads, drink the outflow of blood, and smear a lock of hair in its residue. Afterwards they cut off this lock and keep it in a small cylinder of wood or in a neatly woven hair-bag as a charm."[1]

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[9] *Evans-Pritchard,* Zande blood-brotherhood, pp. 370 ff.

Evans-Pritchard goes on to analyse the main characteristics of Zande blood-brotherhood. He says the form of the ceremony is typical of magical rites. The concrete nucleus is the blood, a substance charged with dynamic magical forces; the fact that the blood-brother himself is addressed should not be interpreted incorrectly, as throughout the spell it is the blood which is the real object of address and which is thought to absorb every clause of the speech. The spell which accompanies the rite is also entirely typical of Zande magic.

The only way in which the Zande blood-covenant is likely to be invalid is through the failure of one party to drink the other's blood. Such an omission could only take place intentionally, when contracting blood-brotherhood with a foreigner. *Evans-Pritchard* heard of one such case, where a chief cheated an Egyptian official to obtain some advantage, and that case did not appear to have been unique. Once the blood of the other man is in a Zande's stomach, he is bound by the sanctions attending the pact, which operate automatically through the blood taking revenge for any breach of faith. The revenge taken by blood differs from that of witchcraft or bad magic in that it effects not merely the individual concerned but also the whole of his family and kin.

Although the blood is thought to act on its own initiative, its action is sometimes fortified by a special rite: "A man injured by his blood-brother takes the piece of cord which was twisted in his partner's hair during the ceremony and which he has carefully preserved, and he winds it into a knot while uttering a spell to his blood in the body of his blood-brother. He calls upon the blood to avenge the injury and exterminate his blood-brother and his kith and kin. He tells it what offence has been committed and directs it to scatter the clan of his blood-brother, against whom he utters an anathema of curses which will bring upon him and his relatives leopards, lions, snakes, thunder, dysentery, leprosy, European justice, and a host of all possible evils. While addressing the blood in this manner he winds the cord into a little ball which he wraps in leaves and hides in the roof of his hut. Here again he performs a typical magic rite with the blood as its agent. It is believed that misfortune will soon overtake a blood-brother who is the object of such a rite and that the oracles will inform him of the cause of his loss or sickness. It is said that he will then go to his aggrieved blood-brother who can be appeased by gifts and persuaded to give to the sick man *ziga kule,* an antidote to the action of the blood. This consists of a medicine which is cooked in oil while a spell is spoken over it and is afterwards eaten. He will also take down the ball of cord from the roof of his hut and unwind it while addressing his blood in order to release his blood-brother from its grip. Every one is aware of this additional sanction of blood-brotherhood, though I do not know of any particular case in which it has been brought into operation. Once more may we notice how the blood is regarded as an ordinary magical agent, for, like many Zande medicines, it has its *ziga* or antidote.

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[1] *Ib.,* pp. 380 ff. Cf. *Calonne-Beaufaict,* Les Azande, pp. 204 f., *Gayer-Andersson,* Some tribal customs, p. 253.

A further sanction is that of public opinion. Open failure to fulfil the obligations of the pact brings upon a man not only magical retribution but also public censure. He becomes an object of contempt to his neighbours and a shame to his kinsmen. If, for instance, a man is travelling in a distant district and he appeals to one of the clansmen of his blood-brother for hospitality and is refused it, this refusal shames his blood-brother and his relatives, who feel themselves responsible for the conduct of their clansman. Another important sanction of a blood-pact springs from the reciprocal nature of its obligations. If you do not carry out your obligations towards your blood-brother, neither will he carry out his obligations towards you. One asks for a gift or a service in the name of the blood, but it is well understood that one's blood-brother in presenting the one or performing the other will demand an equivalent return in the future. It thus happens that each partner keeps a mental tally of the various ways in which he has assisted the other from time to time and he expects that the tally of the other shall be approximately as long as his own. If his partner is generous, he will be generous; if his partner is mean, he will be mean. The reciprocal nature of blood-brotherhood thus provides an integral system of sanctions by the very mode in which it functions. Social systems invariably generate their own sanctions by their mechanism of mutuality.

These reciprocal duties incumbent on a man who has made blood-brotherhood with another are clearly enunciated in the spells which I have cited. A man must act always as a generous friend towards his blood-brother; he must give him food and beer when he visits his homestead; he must refrain from making advances to his women; he must not refuse spears or other gifts, which he is free to part with, on the request of his blood-brother; he must grant the hand of his daughter in marriage, if she is not already espoused; he must not speak evil of his blood-brother to the chiefs; he must render him assistance in quarrels; he must do his best to protect him against vengeance and justice; he must give his blood-brother the head of any animals which he has killed in hunting, if he asks for them. Generally speaking, a man must always support his blood-brother when he is in difficulties, especially when he is in legal difficulties. In the old days when a man was caught in adultery or accused of murder by witchcraft it was essential for his relatives to collect a sufficient amount of wealth to compensate for his offence without delay or he might be mutilated or killed. As he lay bound at the chief's court his relatives and relatives-in-law and blood-brothers brought spears and placed them beside him until they were of sufficient number to protect him against immediate execution. This was perhaps the main function of a blood-brother in the old days. He was a supplementary ally who could be relied upon to assist a man in conjunction with his kin and relatives-in-law on those occasions when the solidarity and relationship by blood and by marriage were most in evidence. When speaking of blood-brotherhood a Zande never neglects to mention among its foremost duties that of giving warning to a man upon whom his chief's displeasure has fallen. One of the main incentives to forming a pact was to have a friend at court who was acquainted with the designs of his chief. Such a man would hear, as a member of the confidential circle of courtiers, the intention of his chief to kill his blood-brother or to deliver him into the hands of avenger. It was his imperative duty to inform his blood-brother of the plot against him, and he had to contrive to do so without involving himself at the same time in open breach of confidence. If he could send word to his blood-brother's residence, he would do so, but often enough he would only hear of the plot while his blood-brother was already on his way to court to answer his chief's summons. In this case he would contrive, by making signs with his face, or by scratching his partner's hand as he shook hands with him, to convey a warning which would allow his partner to escape from court before he was seized. Another duty incumbent on a blood-brother in past times was to cut open the corpses of his partners when called upon to do so, in order that the dead man's kin might ascertain whether he was a witch or had been falsely accused of witchcraft during his lifetime. None of these last three duties has prominence to-day, since summary executions by chiefs are not allowed, and ample time is given for a man to collect fines, in default of which he suffers only imprisonment and not mutilation or death; and since corpses are no longer slit open to discover witchcraft. There are two further obligations of the pact which are in full force to-day. A man must assist in digging the grave of members of his blood-brother's family and kin. It is not so essential for blood-brothers to perform this task as for relatives-in-law, but it is nevertheless considered most reprehensible for a blood-brother to absent himself on such an occasion if he lives in the vicinity. He must also attend mortuary feasts prepared for his blood-brothers and bring spears to exchange with them for beer. Here, again, what is an essential duty for relatives-in-law is more in the nature of an act of courtesy and good faith for blood-brothers.

The obligations which I have enumerated come into force on occasions when special social conditions show up vividly the nature of blood-covenant duties. The pact functions in a less spectacular but more continuous manner from day to day in the ordinary routine of social life. A man constantly eats meals at his blood-brother's homestead and is invited there to beer parties. When a man kills a large beast his blood-brothers come to ask him for a share of the meat. They pay each other frequent visits, in which they are treated as favoured friends and given the best hospitality which the owner of the homestead can afford. Often one will find a man living adjacent to his blood-brother, to whose homestead he has free access since the danger of adultery is reduced to a minimum by the terms and sanctions of a blood-pact. Occasionally a man is largely dependent upon his blood-brothers for the necessities of life. Such a case is that of the mutilated man Bitarangba, to whom reference has already been made. He was not on good terms with his relatives, but lived with one of his blood-brothers, whose food he ate and whose household he assisted by making nets and by snaring guinea-fowl. Besides this man, whose home he shared, Bitarangba had exchanged blood with several other neighbours and was always a welcome guest at their meals. Being physically helpless, he had made a point of contracting alliances of blood with two or three influential men of the neighbourhood, who were able to assist him through their influence at court and by their authority in the locality.

One of the duties most strongly emphasized in the spells addressed to the blood is that of making any gift which may be asked by a blood-brother, but it must not be thought that this leads to unlimited sponging. I was surprised that my blood-brother did not take advantage of my being a European to make extravagant requests for gifts and exercise of political influence. On the contrary, I received on the whole rather more than I gave during our partnership. Blood-brothers do not make unreasonable requests to each other among the Azande. Reciprocity of services makes this impossible since it is expected that there shall be an even balance in exchange of property."[2]

Besides variants mentioned by *Evans-Pritchard,* other writers state that the usual method in some places is mixing of blood on the incisions.[3] *Hutereau,* on the other hand, says that the blood was eaten on a piece of bark, and this leads *Czekanowski* to suppose that in the case of the Zande we are concerned with an imported custom.[4]

The tribes near the Kotta river made blood-pacts among themselves and occasionally with European travellers. The incisions were usually rubbed together to mix the blood. There are instances from the Nsakara, Bugbu, Yakpa and Widri.[5]

The blood alliance among the Banda was contracted by two persons who sucked blood from incisions in each other's right arms. It involved community of goods between the two blood-brothers; they rendered each other mutual aid in case of sickness or misfortune, and so on. The families of the two men were regarded as closely related, and intermarriage was excluded.[6]

Among the Baja the exchange of blood was a final feature of almost all litigation. By this means the parties were definitely reconciled. For the ceremony of the exchange of blood the long tam-tam was laid on the ground, and the two parties took their places at the ends of it, with all their villages grouped behind them. An elder placed himself between them near the middle of the drum. Medicinal water in a dish was placed on the drum, and the two participants splashed with it. An incision was made on the hands of each, and the blood taken up on kola nuts; each man ate the nut with the other's blood on it and uttered a solem oath. When the pact was made between two villages the blood exchanged was that of the two chiefs.[7]

It is also reported that marriage by exchange of blood was practised in the Ubangi region.[8]

Exchange of blood was practised among many tribes in the Cameroons. *Nicod,* writing about the Bassa, Koko, Banend and several other neighbouring tribes, says that two men made an alliance by drinking each other's blood. The custom was also used by secret societies, where the novice made the alliance with the society. The Dualla also entered into blood-brotherhood by drinking each other's blood.[9]

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[2] *Evans-Pritchard,* op. cit. pp. 386 ff.

[3] *Alexander,* From the Niger, p. 353; *Casati,* op. cit. I, pp. 204 f; *Czekanowski,* op. cit. II, p. 47.

[4] *Hutereau,* La vie familiale, pp. 21 ff; *Czekanowski,* op. cit. p. 48.

[5] *Julien,* Du Haut-Oubangui, pp. 136, 141 ff., 149, 156 f; 159, 169; *d'Uzès,* Voyage de mon fils, p. 33.

[6] *Daigre,* Les Bandas, p. 669.

[7] *Poupon,* Étude ethnographique, pp. 132 f.

[8] *Louillet-Ferry,* Le "lusalo", p. 263.

Among the Bubi on Fernando Po, man and wife often had several scars as a mark of their attachment for each other, and *Tessmann* suggests that this was probably the forerunner of tattooing. If a man loved a woman very much, they would cut themselves and rub their blood in each other's wounds; they would thenceforth be regarded as united indissolubly. The man would not have any other woman in the village, and the woman would always be true to her husband. The retribution expected for breaking the vow was death.[1]

Delarozière states that negotiations sometimes gave rise to political alliances between Bamileke groups which had formerly been hostile; in such a case, the conflict was ended by a blood-pact between the chiefs.[2]

The chief of the Bangwa said that he would like to drink blood-brotherhood with *Conrau.* A cup was filled with water, and a few drops of blood mixed with it, drawn from cuts made in the arms of the chief and the European. This was the drink in which they pledged their blood-brotherhood.[3]

In the course of his travels in the Cameroons, *Zintgraff* concluded several blood-pacts. Two members of the Ndjungne tribe, who had been taken captive and were serving as guides, promised to perform this task to his satisfaction on condition that *Zintgraff* consented to mix blood with them. This, they thought, would make it possible for them to trust his promise that they should come to no harm if they satisfactorily carried out their task. *Zintgraff* acceded to their request.

A chief among the Bali offered to enter into blood-brotherhood with *Zintgraff* in order to show that he had no treacherous intentions. This pact was in these tracts held to be extremely "sacred." The ceremony required that *Zintgraff* and the chief should sit opposite each other on round stools. With a razor they made an incision on their right forearms so that the blood oozed forth. This dripped down into a drinking vessel. The chief then gave *Zintgraff* a little pepper to chew, divided a kola-nut and gave him one of the halves. Both chewed these ingredients to a thick paste, which each placed upon the bleeding cuts. Each of the parties then put the blood-soaked pap from the arm of the other into his mouth and washed it down with a gulp of beer mixed with blood. The act was accompanied with the usual oaths, their import being that the two blood-brothers should not do each other any harm, but should assist each other against enemies instead. Nor was the usual imprecation lacking; the one who did not respect the pact concluded would find his belly swelling up within 9 days and he would die a frightful death.

It is interesting to note that *Zintgraff's* native interpreter, who had had some connection with the mission, likened the blood-rite of the natives with its accompanying meal to the Christian eucharist.

Another chief of the Bali also offered to conclude a blood-pact with *Zintgraff.* The ceremony was on the whole the same as that already mentioned. *Zintgraff* points out, however, that in these tracts the form of peace-pact is not always the same, but he stresses that the drinking of each other's blood by the contracting parties, the "mixing of the two bodies" and the union of bodies and wills symbolically expressed in this way is everywhere the essential characteristic. Thus Garega used in his drastic manner to say of the blood-pact: 'True, we have two bellies, but one head.' From the great care with which the different points of the pact are discussed again and again, from the repeated deliberations and reflections to ensure that neither party be cheated by the other, it is clear how seriously the natives take the blood-pact. If they do not intend to respect a treaty, it is impossible to persuade them to conclude a blood-friendship.

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[9] *Nicod,* La vie mystérieuse, p. 87; Pauli, Anthropologisches, p. 116.

[1] *Tessmann,* Die Bubi, pp. 39 f.

[2] *Delarozière,* Les institutions politiques, p. 27.

[3] *Conrau,* Im Lande der Bangwa, p. 206.

Great importance was thus attached to the actual blood-rite in these tracts, as was shown when *Zintgraff* arrived among the Bafut, whom he did not think he could trust, and with whose chief he therefore proposed to enter into blood-brotherhood. The latter, however, would not agree to this. He divided, it is true, a colanut and pepper with him as a sign of his sincerity, but he refused to mix his blood with the European, and his intentions were evidently not good.[4]

Hutter's description of the ceremony among the Bali conforms in the main with the above, but he also states that the ritual varied in many respects. The tribes mentioned also include the Bafut and Bafreng-Bamenda.[5]

Among the northern tribes of Nigeria artificial relationship between individuals and tribes was established by means of the blood-covenant. This custom was thus followed among the Basa, Baushi, Igara, Kamuku, Kakanda, Igbira, Apa, Gwari, Kpoto, Ngwoi, Zumper, and various other tribes.[6]

Among the Basa and Gwari the parties to the contract slit their arms close to the wrist, and then sucked each other's blood.[7] The Kamuku, Apa, Baushi, Kakanda, and Igara did not drink the brother's blood directly, but smeared it on an intermediary substance, which they ate. The Apa, Igbira, Igara, and Kakanda took blood from the wrists of the contracting parties and smear it on a kola-nut, which was then divided and eaten.[8] Such a custom is also reported from the Nupe. *Hambly*, talking of the customs associated with the use of kola nuts, mentions that in establishing a blood-brotherhood between two men a nut was divided, and each of the men ate that part of the nut smeared with the blood of his "brother."[9] The Kamuku, Baushi, and Ngwoi custom was for the entire male population of the contracting villages to meet together and slay and cut up a goat and sheep. Blood was then taken from the arm of a boy from each village, and this was smeared on the pieces of meat. The meat was then rubbed in ashes, and eaten by the men of the other town. The Zumper were blood-brothers of the men of Takum. The sons of the contracting chiefs had their wrists slit, and the blood was allowed to mingle with water in a calabash. The two sons drank the mixture, and the chiefs then said: "Our blood has now been mingled. If henceforth we kill or sell the members of each other's tribe, then may we swell up and die." Gwari and Zumper husbands and wives who were deeply attached to one another used in former times to plight their troth by means of the blood ceremony.[1]

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[4] *Zintgraff*, Nord-Kamerun, pp. 151, 175 f., 222 f., 240; Cf. *Schmidt*, Deutschlands Kolonien, II, p. 34.

[5] *Hutter*, Der Abschluss von Blutsverwandschaft, pp. 1 ff.

[6] *Meek*, The Northern tribes, I, p. 211.

[7] *Ib.*, loc. cit.

[8] *Ib.*, p. 212.

[9] *Hambly*, Source Book, p. 48.

Seton maintains that the Igara employed the blood-rite solely for commercial purposes. He states that a trader, or, in former times, a slave-dealer "hearing of a town where he could trade profitably, would go there with gifts and ask for the most prominent man in the town. Repairing to his house he would compliment him, present his gifts, and ask for his friendship. If the latter agreed, a kola nut would be procured and broken; then each would make a small incision on his wrist, rub a piece of the kola in the blood and give it to the other to eat, each swearing to be faithful to the other in all matters and to help each other's relatives if necessary. Even if one had done wrong the other was bound to help him. Failure to help was expected to cause death to the one false to the oath."[2] Supplementary ceremonies followed, to confirm the oath. These included the drinking of water. From the sociological point of view it is worthy of note that sons and daughters of blood-brothers might not marry.[2]

Another account from the Igara varies somewhat, as, according to this, when two men entered into blood-brotherhood, they did so by making a small cut in the fore-arm and drinking each other's blood. Two blood-brothers must stand by one another until death. This instance also applied to the Okpoto (Kwotto).[3]

The neighbouring Basakomo followed a similar procedure. They cut their arms close to the wrist and sucked each other's blood.[4]

There are several accounts of the blood-pact among the Tiv or Munci. *P. J. Bohannan* has recently done research among them, and he writes that "the pact of blood-brotherhood among the Tiv is not common between individuals. I know of no cases that could be called authenticated, though I have been told about it; there are certain wellknown pacts between clans of Tiv, and also between Tiv clans and clans of those peoples who live just to the south of them . . . I know of one case in which an actual blood pact extension is made—between Kunav (a very large 'clan' of Tiv) and the Utange (a small clan group of Tiv-like peoples living to the south)."[5]

According to *Abraham,* the Tiv term for this pact is *ikul (ikur),* meaning 'treaty.' Another term used in this connection is *iye,* which is used for a contract between clans to facilitate intermarriage.[6] *Akiga* says that *iye* was sealed by a mingling of the blood of the contracting parties. The pact was sealed in the following way: "The old men came together, and a large grindstone was set on the ground. A member of one of the two clans stood up, and laid his hand upon it. This was then cut with a razor so that the blood flowed out on the stone. After this one man from the other clan came and placed his hand there, and this was also cut so that the blood flowed on the stone. Then some locust-bean seasoning was powdered over the blood, together with a little salt and red palm oil, and these were mixed together. The men of both clans stood up, and each took up a little of the mixture and ate it. When it was finished the elders said, 'This day we have made a bond between us. Let there never be bloodshed between our two clans, that the land be good, the people go about in safety, and there be no war.' In olden times, if they sealed a pact with their blood, they feared even to shave each other's heads lest they should break the skin. And if they did so, and the razor should accidentally make some tiny wound, however slight, the man who had been cut must take the razor and with it make a cut on the other, but not with any ill feeling. Treaties, in the old days, were very strictly observed, and not regarded lightly. These were all the things which had to be done before they could go to seek wives under the *iye* agreement without causing friction."[7]

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[1] *Meek,* loc. cit.

[2] *Seton,* Notes on the Igala tribe, p. 162.

[3] *Byng Hall,* Notes on the Okpoto, p. 167.

[4] *Id.* Notes on the Bassa Komo Tribe, p. 18.

[5] (Letter 13/3 1950).

[6] *Abraham,* A Dictionary, pp. 143, 324.

Abraham mentions a case of a private treaty which was consecrated with blood—a blood-pact between man and wife. They slit their arms and drunk one another's blood as a sign that they would never part; they also put tongue on tongue and the husband slept once with her on the day before her first periods ceased, thus absorbing her blood.[8]

Mockler-Ferryman say that persons entering the secret societies of the Upper Cross River region had to go through a blood ceremony, this being one of the most sacred oaths. They describe the ritual procedure as follows: "In some districts the principal ceremony is the washing of each other's feet. Among the tribes inland from Opobo, a goat is brought out before the two parties, its head is struck off at one blow, and the blood smeared with the fingers over the forehead and breast of all present, after which pieces of raw flesh are crammed by one party into the mouths of the other. Captain Roupell gives the following account of the ceremony of "blood brotherhood" as performed in the country of the Upper Cross River:—"The chopping of imbiam or doctor is the native form of oath, the ceremony of which is as follows: four, six, or eight young men from each tribe being selected, sit down facing each other; one man from each tribe rises and clasps the other's right hand, fingers interlacing; a mutual friend then lances the wrist of each until the blood flows freely; a grain of Indian corn, one of Guinea corn, and a piece of kola-nut are brought and rubbed in the blood of each; this being done, the two men each eat the corn and nut and blood off the other's wrist. They then repeat an oath to the effect that he who harms or takes gun against his brother—which the other man now considers himself to be—may be killed by the forest-god if he goes into the forest; if he go by water, may he die by water; if he take fire to cook, may the fire kill him, and so forth. They then hug each other and are placed back to back, when the native administering the oath separates them by dropping some earth between them. Palm wine being then produced, they sip alternately from the same glass. This form of oath is considered so binding that the bad characters are among those selected to partake of it, being those most likely to bring trouble on the rest of the tribe. It is supposed to be binding as long as the actual parties to whom it is administered live."[9]

In the same region—more precisely, among the Nde and neighbouring tribes—the principal chiefs sealed agreements in the following way: "three men from each party stood in the middle of the assembly facing one another and grasping one another's right hands, on the backs of which, between thumb and first finger, small gashes were made with a knife so that the blood just appeared; then a fragment of kola-nut and a corn of maize having been dipped in the blood and left on the top of the wounds, first one chief and then the other, having in a loud voice taken the mutual oath on behalf of his tribe, leaned over and licked up the blood-stained morsels from off the hand of the man facing him. The oath was an invocation to the deities to work evil upon those members of the tribe who should in any way break the agreement upon which they had just entered. This ceremony finished, the two tribes, who had up to that point held aloof from one another, mingled together in friendly fashion, and rejoicings took place. The next day the Commissioner and the district medical officer—who, by his kind and patient attention to the sick natives of the place, had done much to establish that feeling of confidence which had induced the hostile parties to submit to arbitration—personally helped to cut down and set fire to the war-camps and stockades which had been stopping the free interchange of trade."[1]

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[7] *Akiga's* story, pp. 142 f.; Cf. *Downes,* The Tiv People, Lagos 1933: There is a short discussion of the blood pact in this book.

[8] *Abraham,* The Tiv People, p. 125.

[9] *Mockler-Ferryman,* Br. West Africa, pp. 337 f.

Talbot says that the blood pact among the Ekoi and Ibibio usually took the form of an oath sworn before Mbiam Juju, the blood juju. This oath might be taken in various connections, which are described below in accordance with *Talbot*'s account. He says that the blood-bond was entered into between great friends; each one sucked the blood which issued from a small cut, usually made on the arm or wrist of the other; or the blood was allowed to flow into a basin and then, mixed with 'medicine,' drunk by both. Should one of them afterwards act in an unfriendly way towards the other, the juju would catch him and he would die. Similar ceremonies were sometimes practised by the Ekoi to ensure fidelity in a wife, since, should she prove unfaithful, the husband's blood in the woman's veins is thought to rebel and cause her death. *Talbot* says that each of the parties sucked a little blood from the wrist of the other as in the ancient marriage rite. A blood ceremony could protect the people of a village from witchcraft, for should one of the celebrants afterwards attempt to injure any of the others, he would be caught by the blood juju, whose 'medicine' had in such a case been mixed with the blood. *Talbot* relates that in one of the larger villages, the people were dying so fast that it was thought witches must be killing them. To stop this the chief proclaimed that the inhabitants must come together on a certain day and he ordered that the blood juju, the blood mingling ceremony, should be practised. A cut was made in the body of each, and a few drops of blood allowed to flow into a calabash half full of dry corn which had been brought for the purpose. None were exempt, even the babies born that day gave one drop of blood, and, when all had been collected, each man, woman and child was made to partake of the corn.

Sometimes the rite was performed when it was desired to make a permanent peace between two warring tribes. It was often carried out by a representative of each tribe eating a kola nut, a grain of maize and another of guinea corn, which had been placed in the blood issuing from a cut on the other's wrist. Each then swore an oath, invoking the juju that he who first took up gun against his 'brother' might be slain by the god of the forest, of fire or of water, whichever he had first to do with. They then embraced and were separated by the priest, who administered the juju, and then placed a clod of earth between them, and the ceremony ended by both alternately drinking palm wine from the same vessel.[2]

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[1] *Partridge,* Cross River Natives, pp. 191f.

Leonard mentions that all over the Niger Delta it is by no means uncommon to find blood alliances which have existed for a long time between two villages or communities. The people of Uwet, for example, were allied by blood-brotherhood with the Efik, both being bound by the most solemn oath never to look on each other's blood; and the same form of alliance formerly bound together the Brassmen and the Ibani, which *Leonard* thinks was the explanation of the good fellowship that always existed between them. Another form of this ancient custom existed among the people of the Kwa river, in the vicinity of Old Calabar, who banded themselves together by a blood compact for mutual protection against the aggressive encroachments of their powerful Efik neighbours, who, on occasions when victims were required for human sacrifice, had made it a regular practice to go into Kwa river territory and carry off people. But *Leonard* stresses that this blood alliance was as much in vogue between individuals as is was among communities, and compacts of this kind were even made between members of different tribes. He mentions a case that occurred at Eket, where a man had become very much attached to an Ibibio woman and made strenuous efforts to persuade her to contract a blood-covenant with him which would bind her to him for life. Whether the bond was contracted between members of the same sex or opposite sexes, the following ceremony was performed. Each of the participants made a scratch or small cut on the arm of the other, and while they licked each other's blood they made a vow that, having joined themselves together, they would never part.[3]

Hambly states that among the Yoruba a kola nut might be smeared with the blood of the contracting parties, who then ate it.[4] Details for Yoruba have also been given by *Hazoumé*. He says that the blood-pact was called *imoulé* by the Yoruba and their neighbours the Nago.[5] *Margaret Baumann* informs us that the king of the Yoruba had a blood-brother who was the king's 'speaker' and seems to have been a kind of royal envoy as well.[6] *Justine M. Johnson*, who worked among the Yoruba, made some enquiries about this blood-brother of the king and she writes to me, "The Alafin of Oyo is the king of all the Yoruba tribe, while the Oni of Ife is the spiritual leader. The Alafin said that never had he entered into a blood pact with any man, nor considered any outsider a blood-brother by any ceremony. The Dahomean king, as you are no doubt familiar, made blood-brothers of envoys to other kings so that it would be impossible for them to betray him. To understand why the latter could have blood-brothers but not the former, I believe it is only necessary to examine the religion of both ethnic groups. The Yoruba king is the living descendant of the gods, for the gods are former living kings, including Sango, Ogun, etc., while in Dahomey the pantheons of gods are separate.

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[2] *Talbot*, In the Shadow, pp. 109, 200 f; *Id.*, Life in S. Nigeria, pp. 46, 244, 261, 266. *Id.*, The Peoples of S. Nigeria, pp.

[3] *Leonard*, The lower Niger, pp. 242 f. 260, 455. Cf. *De Cardi*, Ju-Ju Laws and Customs, p. 64.

[4] *Hambly*, Culture Areas, p. 453.

[5] *Hazoumé*, Le Pacte de sang, pp. 2, 55.

[6] *Baumann*, Sons of Sticks, pp. 3, 51, 57, 64.

While the royal ancestors have their cult, they are regarded as national protective deities in an entirely different category from the gods themselves. Hence it would be possible for the Dahomean king to have a blood-brother from the outside of the family, but not the Yoruba king."[7]

According to legend, the Dahomean blood-pact originated between a hunter and Aziza, the chief of the fairies, the little people. The hunter was variously held to have delivered Aziza, disguised as a deer, from death. In other versions the fairy appeared to the hunter spontaneously, sucked some of the blood from the back of his hand, and gave some of his own blood in return. The pact thus established, Aziza revealed to the hunter a number of occult secrets, whereby he was able to make 'medicines' and become a famous witch-doctor. *Hazoumé* points out that there were many varieties of the pact. The most common form, the main outline of which was followed in most regions, took place at night in the heart of the forest. The friends, men or women, knelt in a circle, completely naked, without even bracelets or rings. A ring was cut in the ground behind them, by passing a knife to each, from hand to hand behind the back, to the left. A hole was made in the middle of the circle, and a human skull placed beside it. Water, a viper's head, and various crushed leaves were put into the skull. The knife was passed round again, and each person made a small cut on the back of his left hand, just above the thumb. The wound was dried with a piece of cotton, which was also thrown into the skull. After all had done this, the skull was passed round, and everybody had a drink of the mixture. Sometimes a lemon was divided and the halves pressed against the cuts so that the juice and the blood was mixed. The participants then sucked the juice with each other's blood in it. The oath of mutual fidelity was then sworn, and disaster promised to those who were unfaithful. The gods were invoked as witnesses. A plentiful meal followed, at which they all revealed their plans.[8]

Many notable persons entered into blood-pacts with their partisans to ensure their fidelity. King Gezo of Abomey made a pact with the Brazilian Francisco da Souza. His successor, King Glele, made many pacts with his spies in enemy towns, to make sure that they could be trusted. On these latter occasions, the king himself would rarely be present; he could be represented by a high official, and symbolized by a royal staff placed between the contracting parties. King Gbehanzin entered into such pacts with the envoys he sent to France to negotiate.[9]

The rite sometimes varied according to whether it was an agriculturist, hunter or warrior who was involved. This applied in particular to the objects figuring in the ritual: for an agriculturist it would be an agricultural implement, for a hunter a hunting weapon or the bone of an animal, or the like. Warriors would have their weapons with them, and in addition their drink would be prepared in the skull of someone killed in war.

Conspiracies were often involved, directed to various ends. The conspirators might wish to seize power, to carry out a robbery or commit a murder.

If the pact was between two villages, delegates were chosen from among the elders of each, and these went into the forest, equipped in a fashion appropriate to the occasion. A place was cleared, where the delegates ate a meal together and underwent other preparations. Afterwards, an incision was made on the back of the hand of each, all of them touched the incision with their tongues, whereupon they swallowed the blood. A leaf or a twig was then placed on the wound and thrown into a hole. The oaths followed: they were made in the name of the respective villages, and promised to warn the ally against threatening danger, to help in case of attack, to live in amity with one another.[1]

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[7] (Letter 8/6 1950).

[8] *Hazoumé,* Le Pacte de sang, pp. 11 ff, 45 ff.

[9] *Ib.,* pp. 20 f., 28 ff.

The father of a family who wished to ensure the fidelity of his wives, the affection of his children, or the honesty of his servants, or who feared that his wives and heirs might poison him, would get them to make a blood-pact with him.

But *Hazoumé* adds that it was originally only adult men who contracted blood-brotherhood. It was later that some married couples had recourse to the pact to ensure fidelity.[2]

With regard to the blood-brothers' obligations, *Hazoumé* says that these were very rigorous, and he makes a comparision with 'l'ancienne Chevalerie,' though he remarks that whereas the chevaliers admitted in certain cases a dissolution of their bonds of fraternity during the lifetime of a member, the Dahomeans permitted no escape from the obligations of their blood-pact: "Les frères sont tenus de s'entr'aider et de se témoigner une affection continue et incorruptible. Il est exigé d'eux un dévouement allant jusqu'au sacrifice de la vie, et cela toute leur vie durant."[3]

It has been suggested that the animal mythology which is intimately associated with this pact is probably connected with totemistic myths. The totem animal would protect the members of the clan. According to the myth of the blood-pact, the chief of the fairies, disguised as a deer, promised to help the hunter who had spared his life. The explanations given for the adoption of totems are often based on some such idea. *Parrinder* stresses also that one side of the belief in metamorphosis is "that of a pact supposedly made at times between a man and an animal by which the man can become invisible and turn into an animal form."[4] The same author points out that the communion in sacrifice forms a type of blood-pact, and binds the woman in fidelity to her husband.[5]

During a period of field research in Dahomey, *Herskovits* did not find any blood-pact in connection with institutionalised friendship. However, he says that the blood-pact did exist as part of the ritual of mutual self-help societies.[6]

Such a self-help society was a non-secret group organized for social or economic mutual aid. It could be entirely local, but there were also those which were more widely distributed, even possessing a few 'secrets.' The first form was organized by a group of young men—sometimes women were included—who had grown up together and had known each other from childhood. They mingled their blood and made preliminary vows of blood-brotherhood, while they agreed to a series of mutual obligations which constituted a sort of insurance for any member who suffered misfortune. The generic term applied to societies in which membership was limited to those who swore the blood bond was *gbe*. Some of these societies are of special interest as they were probably secret societies, and *Herskovits* says of them that "only a vague description was obtained, for these apparently manifest an element of secrecy that perhaps marks them as a post-conquest phenomenon. According to one account, the number of members belonging to one of these often runs into the hundreds, and there are some which, extending their membership outside the confines of Dahomey into Togoland and Nigeria, may have over a thousand persons affiliated with them. It is said that a man who wishes to join such a society is introduced by someone already a member, after which he is put on probation for a period of years. Final entrance into the society is achieved when a man is young and the initiation, coming after the period of trial, is secretly held at night. The members identify one another by the use of signs known only to them."[7]

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[1] *Ib.*, pp. 92 ff., 53 ff.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 137; Cf. *Kita*, Coutumes, p. 79.

[3] *Hazoumé*, op. cit. p. 146; Cf. *Agheci*, Emblèmes, p. 420.

[4] *Parrinder*, West African Psychology, pp. 134, 86; Cf. *Id.*, West African Religion, pp. 148 ff., 191.

[5] *Id.*, West African Psychology, p. 63.

[6] *Herskovits*, Dahomey, I, p. 239 n. 2.

Societies exclusively for women also existed. There were numerous ways of organizing them, but in their structure and function they were similar to other of the indigenous Dahomean types. That is, a mutual blood bond was established between the members, there was an initiation, dues were paid, and they carried the usual mutual-aid and insurance features.[8]

The secret societies which were rife in the region around the Slave Coast employed blood-pacts. *Courdeaux* states that the initiation among the numerous secret societies was called "the mixing of blood." Each initiate received a slight incision and mixed his blood with the initiator. The scar left by the incision served as a recognition mark.[9]

Witte says that blood-brotherhood was practised among the Anlo-Ewe, and served an essential purpose in so far as a person without allies would not have been able to live in a country which was in such a turbulent state. Alliances for protection and mutual aid were contracted between tribes, and even between peoples or, on the other hand, individuals. The ritual usually varied from tribe to tribe. *Witte* describes the ceremony which he considers characteristic for the Ewe. When two persons wished to contract blood-brotherhood, they met together one morning in the presence of an older man, the master of ceremonies, and others who were witnesses. The two brothers-to-be swore an oath promising to be faithful to the blood-brotherhood. The old man slit the skin of their under-arms, divided a lemon and pressed the halves against the cuts so that the juice and the blood mixed. The two then sucked the juice with each other's blood in it.

The two brothers then began to tease and joke with one another, pretending to fight, and so on. The onlookers broke up the 'fight,' and said that it must be the last fight between them. Curses about breaking the pledge followed. *Witte* says that there is much in this blood-friendship which may appeal even to a European. It was strictly respected and fulfilled, and each blood-brother paid serious attention to the interests of the other.[1]

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[7] *Ib.*, p. 252.

[8] *Ib.*, p. 254.

[9] *Courdeaux,* La Côte des Esclave, p. 6; *Bouche,* Sept ans en Afrique, p. 170 n. 1.

[1] *Witte,* Beiträge zur Ethnographie, pp. 987 f.

Spiess describes the same blood-pact among the Anlo-Ewe, and the ritual in his version differs only in that the vehicle for the blood was not only the lemon but also 'brandy' into which some drops of blood were allowed to fall before drinking it.[2]

From the Glidyi-Ewe, *Westermann* describes the rite as follows. Two elders conducted the ceremony, which began with an enumeration of all the duties of the brotherhood. After this the two men were cut in the upper arm and they sucked one another's blood. They linked their right arms, and drank together from a shell. The elders then said, "To-day you have both become as one man." Blood-brothers should not have secrets from one another; if one had intercourse with another woman he must tell the other so that he could avoid her. If one was incapacitated, he would be able to rely on the other's aid. After the death of a blood-brother, the survivor acted as his executor.[3]

An instance of interchange of blood between man and woman among the Ewe-speaking people of Peki in the Volta River District has been reported to me by Dr. *K. A. Busia* of the University College of the Gold Coast. He writes: "I have made enquiries among various tribes in the Gold Coast. It appeared from one story I was told of a pact between a man and a woman, that the pact of blood-brotherhood was known and practised among the Ewe-speaking people of Peki in the Volta River District of the Gold Coast Colony. In the instance of which I was told, the man and woman pledged fidelity to each other in a solem pact by making cuts on each other's wrists and mingling their blood. But this is no longer practised."[4]

We have an account of agreement by a blood pact in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, among the Tallensi. Professor *Fortes* has recorded this instance from their traditions about Mosuor, one of their ancestors, who settled in Taleland by entering into a solem pact of blood-brotherhood with the ancestor-chief of the owner of the land. They entered into the blood-pact in the following way: "A cut was made on the wrist of each, and each licked the blood of the other. Thus *'ba leeba mabiih, ba leeba soog,* they became brethren, they became uterine brothers' and pledged themselves and their descendants to perpetual peace. This was a unique instance of blood-brotherhood, which is not practised in Taleland to-day."[5]

A Swede who was a road-builder on the Gold Coast for several years, describes how he became blood-brother to Kwami Tano, king of the Safwi. He maintains that he was the first white man to receive this honour. At the beginning of the ceremony the king explained the traditions and rites of his forefathers. Then a witch doctor made a cut on the palm of the European's right hand and that of the chief as well. They clasped hands and put their hands into a bowl of blood, from which they then drank of the mixture. The witch doctor afterwards splashed the blood remaining in the bowl over the two blood-brothers and elders standing nearby. The king gave several gifts to his new blood-brother.[6]

But as regards the blood-pact in the Ashanti region Dr. *Busia* says in his letter cited above:

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[2] *Spiess,* Blicke in das Zauber-u. Gotteswesen, p. 17.

[3] *Westermann,* Die Glidyi-Ewe in Togo, pp. 50 f., 55.

[4] (Letter 20/2 1950).

[5] *Fortes,* The Dynamics of clanship, p. 22.

[6] *Joslin,* Guld, pärlor och reptiler, pp. 217 ff.

"Very reliable informants in Ashanti said that they had no information of such pacts of blood-brotherhood amongst the Ashanti; so far as I can ascertain, it is also unknown amongst the Akim or Ga peoples of the Eastern Province of the Colony.

In the Northern Territories, the only recorded instance is that by Dr. Fortes.

I have not been able to check up the information given by Mr. Mike Joslin, as I have not been able to visit the Wassaw Country since I received your letter, but people of that area from whom I have enquired have expressed doubt or ignorance of the practice. If it ever was practised, it is now one of the many dead or dying customs of this Country."

Another letter from the Gold Coast confirms the lack of a tradition of blood-brotherhood among the Ashanti, and at the same time provides an instance of exchange of blood in a marriage rite similar to that mentioned above. Dr. *Robert A. Lystad* writes to me from Goaso Ahafo, Gold Coast: "Since October I have been located in a rural area of Ashanti some 85 miles due west of Kumasi, which is the heart of the Ashanti nation. The inhabitants of this region are not Kumasi Ashanti, although they are present in small numbers. The bulk of the population of this region is from tribes neighbouring on Kumasi which were subdued and welded into the Ashanti nation during the 18th and 19th centuries. Despite these apparently diverse origins, all these tribes had identical Akan culture; the only differences were political, and these differences were not of formal structure but merely of local autonomy. Hence the evidence from the Ahafo area is likely to hold for all of Ashanti.

In addition I have talked with informants from the Brong area north of Kumasi and now part of the Ashanti Confederacy and with Akwapims and Akims from the region south of Kumasi and Ashanti proper. All of these people are Akan peoples with the same culture, or approximately so.

None of these are aware of any institution of blood brotherhood, nor have they ever heard of such an institution in their traditions. There is a very informal institution called "best friends," but this is simply a matter of a growth of friendship between compatible personalities and involves no formal recognition; the friends may call each other "brother" (or "sister" in the case of women), but it is only in a manner of speaking and does not carry with it the rights and obligations associated with actual brotherhood or with blood brotherhood.

I have come across one case of the interchange of blood through cuts on the wrist, but this occured in a marriage rite, the husband and wife exchanging blood as a token of their union. This occured in Sekondi, which is Fanti country (a branch of the Akan culture)."[7]

De Coutouly, in an article about initiation cermonies among the Kru, mentions that at a higher stage of initiation there was an exchange of blood between a member of the society and the one who was applying for admission. This exchange took place in the following way: the blood of the novice and the blood of the initiate were collected and mingled in a wooden bowl, from incisions on the arm or any other part of the body, and the two participants dipped their fingers in the blood one after the other and touched one another's chests and foreheads with the still warm liquid.[8]

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[7] (Letter 20/4 1950).

Westermann mentions that within the Leopard and Poro societies in Liberia the initiates entered into a blood-pact.[9]

A form of blood-pact among the Mande is described by *Fontaine.* There were two rites; either blood was drawn from a vein in the hand or small pieces of skin from the arm 'transplanted' from one to the other with the aid of a magic plaster. This practice was said to be used mainly by the secret societies. It was supposed to be possible for the two brothers to communicate with each other by a sort of telepathy: "Il suffit que sur la partie greffée un des alliés lance un message à l'aide d'une pointe de bois ou fer, pour que son correspondant éprouve des picotement sur la partie greffée et comprenne le message envoyé d'une lointaine contrée."[1]

There are a lot of instances reported from the Khasonke, Malinke, Soninke and other peoples of the Upper Niger and Upper Volta. *Monteil* mentions that some Khasonke clans were bound by a contract which was based upon a solemn exchange of blood. The ceremony took place between two men, from whom some drops of blood were taken from their upper arms and mixed with goat's milk. They each drank half of the mixture, and swore to regard each other as brothers thenceforward. As a result of this pact, the members of the clans might not harm one another without violating the oath and incurring serious penalties. They could not give evidence against one another in a lawsuit. Nor could a man marry a virgin of the other clan, as the oath forbade them to spill one another's blood. On the other hand, marriage with a widow of the other clan was legal.[2]

Blood-brotherhood in this part of Africa has been discussed by several authors in connection with an allied institution, the joking relationship. Many instances are given which show that a blood-pact was often the basis for a joking relationship.[3]

One instance from the Malinke is a myth involving a blood-pact between a Fulbe and a smith. Their blood was mixed at circumcision. *Doumbia,* who mentions this myth, says that even in recent times in order to renew the ancestral pact, Fulbe and smith pricked themselves in the arm and drank one another's blood, at the same times swearing that they would never quarrel thenceforth.[4]

This alliance is called *senanku* in the Mande language. *Dieterlen* states that among the Bambara, Bozo, Somono and Dogon, persons were *senanku* and they sealed their friendship in a definite manner: they opened veins and a little of the blood was smeared on the other's wound.[5]

Labouret has an instance of such a pact in the Upper Volta region, where there are certain clear allusions to a blood-pact made among Dagari heads of families by drinking each other's blood from pricks in the arm.[6]

The close alliance between the Dogon and the Niger river fishermen, the Bozo, is said to have originated in the following circumstances: When a famine ravaged the country, Dogon and Bozo took council with one another. It was decided that the Bozo should go and fish, and leave their children in the care of the Dogon. During their absence, the chief of the Dogon saw one of the Bozo children on the point of dying, and immediately cut flesh from the calf of his leg, roasted it, and gave it to his friend's son to eat, whereupon the boy revived.[7]

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[8] *De Coutouly,* Cérémonies et épreuves rituelles, p. 61.

[9] *Westermann,* Die Kpelle, pp. 230, 278.

[1] *Fontaine,* La magie chez les Noirs, p. 76.

[2] *Monteil,* Les Khassonké, p. 281; *Id.,* Monographie de Djenné, p. 320; *Id.,* Les empires, pp. 316 f.

[3] *Labouret,* Les Manding et leur langue, pp. 101 f., *Monteil,* Les empires, loc. cit.

[4] *Doumbia,* Étude de clan, pp. 370 ff.

[5] *Dieterlen,* Essai sur la religion, p. 83.

[6] *Labouret,* La Parenté, p. 252.

Paulme thinks that in all these instances the blood-pact plays a part comparable to that ordinarily assigned to marriage. Those allied by blood consider their relationship to have a social significance next to that reserved for the uterine relationship: "Par ailleurs, nous voyons clairement comment le pact du sang peut, en certains cas, se substituer au mariage pour venir consacrer une alliance nouvelle: donner sa chair et son sang, comme le chef dogon donne sa chair pour ranimer l'enfant bozo défaillant; ou donner une femme en mariage et avec cette femme les enfants qui pourront naître de son sang, comme le forgeron donne sa fille au Peul,—le geste garde toujours son même sens profond: dans un cas comme dans l'autre, l'allié donne son sang, il donne la vie."[8]

Griaule has discussed this relationship, which he calls a 'cathartic relationship.' He says that in daily life the most common manifestation of this relationship or pact are mutual purifications, exchanges of insults, and reconciliations. The pact is based on the supposition that once upon a time a part of the vital force of each partner was deposited in the other, and thus every Bozo possesses in himself a part of the Dogon, and vice versa. In situations where the relationship comes into action, each party then acts on that part of himself which is in the other and which forms a sort of foundation, in the person of the other, on which he can work. A partner in this relationship is the most suitable agent for integrating and sharing the spiritual powers of the other. This stabilizing function is similar to that exercised by the notion of twinship among certain African peoples. Twinship is indeed at the root of those exchanges, whether on the material or the spiritual plane, which are one element in social equilibrium.[9]

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[7] *Arnaud,* Notes sur, pp. 260 ff., *Desplagnes,* Le plateau central, p. 191., *Frobenius,* Atlantis 6 pp. 314 f.

[8] *Paulme,* Parenté à plaisanteries, pp. 441, 444.

[9] *Griaule,* L'alliance cathartique, pp. 242 ff.

Madagascar

We now turn to blood-brotherhood on Madagascar, and we begin with two of the most detailed descriptions of the practice, before proceeding to the variants occurring among a number of minor tribes. The first description is one of the earliest accounts, and is given by *Ellis*.

In describing the popular engagements in use among the Malagasy, he states that the usage of forming brotherhoods is one of the most remarkable of the country. The design of this custom might almost justify its being designated the freemasonry of Madagascar, he says, but "from that institution, however, it differs in two essential respects: its rites and ceremonies are not secret, but public; and its object is to cement two individuals in the bonds of most sacred friendship, and not to constitute a mysterious and secret society. More than two may thus associate, if they please, but the practice is usually limited to that number, and rarely embraces more than three or four individuals. It is called *fatidrá*, i.e. "dead blood," either because the oath is taken over the blood of a fowl killed on the occasion, or because a small portion of blood is drawn from each individual, when thus pledging friendship, and drunk by those to whom friendship is pledged, with execrations of vengeance on each other in case of violating the sacred oath. To obtain the blood, a slight incision is made in the skin covering the centre of the bosom, significantly called *ambavafo*, "the mouth of the heart." Allusion is made to this in the formula of this tragi-comical ceremony. When two or more persons have agreed on forming this bond of fraternity, a suitable place and hour are determined upon, and some gunpowder and a ball are brought, together with a small quantity of ginger, a spear, and two particular kinds of grass. A fowl also is procured; its head is nearly cut off; and it is left in this state to continue bleeding during the ceremony. The parties then pronounce a long form of imprecation and mutual vow to this effect—"Should either of us prove disloyal to the sovereign, or unfaithful to each other, then perish the day, and perish the night. Awful is that, solemn is that which we are now both about to perform! O the mouth of the heart!—this is to be cut and we shall drink each other's blood. O this ball!—O this powder! O this ginger! O this fowl weltering in its blood! it shall be killed, it shall be put to excruciating agonies,—it shall be speared at this corner of the hearth, . . . And whoever would seek to kill or injure us, to injure our wives, or our children, to waste our money or our property; or if either of us should seek to do what would not be approved of by the king or by the people: should one of us deceive the other by making that which is unjust appear just; should one accuse the other falsely; should either of us with our wives and children be lost and reduced to slavery, . . . then, that good may arise out of evil, we follow this custom of the people; and we do it for the purpose of assisting one another with our families, if lost in slavery, by whatever property either of us may possess, for our wives are as one to us, and each other's children as his own, and our riches as common property: O the mouth of the heart! O the ball! O the powder! O the ginger! O this miserable fowl weltering in its blood! thy liver do we eat, thy liver do we eat; and should either of us retract from the terms of this oath, let him instantly become a fool, let him instantly become blind, let this covenant prove a curse to him: let him not be a human being: let there be no heir to inherit after him, but let him be reduced and float with the water never to see its source; let him never obtain; what is out of doors, may it never enter; and what is within, may it never go out; the little obtained may he be deprived of it, and let him never obtain justice from the sovereign nor from the people! But if we keep and observe this covenant, let these things bear witness. O mouth of the heart! (repeating as before) may this cause us to live long and happy with our wives and our children; may we be approved by the sovereign, and beloved by the people; may we get money; may we obtain property, cattle, etc., may we marry wives, . . . may we have good robes, and wear a good piece of cloth on our bodies, since, amidst our toils and labour, these are the things we seek after. And this we do that we may with all fidelity assist each other to the last.

The incision is then made, as already mentioned; a small quantity of blood extracted and drank by the covenanting parties respectively saying as they take it, "These are our last words. We will be like rice and water; in town they do not separate, and in the fields they do not forsake one another: we will be as the right and left hand of the body; if one be injured, the other necessarily suffers and sympathizes with it."

The terms of the covenant are not regarded as binding literally; the respective possessions of the parties, such as cattle, slaves, money, etc., are not considered as common property; but the engagement involves a sort of moral obligation for one to assist the other in every extremity: and, however devoid of meaning some parts of the ceremony of forming brotherhood may appear, and whatever indications of barbarity of feeling may appear in others, it is less exceptionable than many that prevail among the people.

The design of the engagement—which is in fact a covenant to render mutual help in seasons of peril or need—is highly commendable; while the limited number embraced in the same fraternity prevents its ever threatening, as combinations so permanently binding are sometimes supposed to do, the peace of society. So far as those who have resided in the country have observed its effects, they appear almost invariably to have been safe to the community, and beneficial to the individuals by whom the compact was formed."[1]

Ellis states that among the Malagasy few classes derive more benefit from the covenant of brotherhood than the slaves, who very generally avail themselves of the advantages its provisions afford, and thus, in some degree, mitigate the severity of their lot. Its influence is also acknowledged by the highest ranks: the late Radama, when pursuing his career of conquest on the western shore, confirmed his treaty of friendship with a shrewd and powerful chieftain near Tamatave, by the covenant of brotherhood; in ratifying which, the high contracting parties drank each other's blood.[2]

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[1] *Ellis,* The History, I, pp. 187 ff.

In connection with the ramifications of the pact mentioned by *Ellis* above, we may quote *Deschamps,* who says that its obligations "constituent aussi une facilité accordée aux paresseux et elles expliquent que les bandits, dans certaines regions, soient si difficiles à découvrir."[3]

Ellis does not mention whether blood-brotherhood could be sworn by two women or by a man and a woman. From the Tanala and other tribes, however, such bonds have been reported. The blood-pact among the Tanala is described by *Linton* and *Mattéi.* We commence with the detailed description given by *Linton:*

"The Tanala, like all Madagascar tribes, attach great importance to oaths of brotherhood, called *mifanàngena.* Entering such a bond is a personal matter. The permission of the family is not necessary. It seems to be a genuine expression of affection and I never heard of its being used for political purposes or personal gain. Brotherhood may be sworn by two men—the commonest form—by two women, or by a man and a woman. Persons of the same social class can take the oath, also a noble and a commoner, or a commoner and a slave, but not a noble and a slave.

Brotherhood between a man and a woman is rather rare. It is practically limited to couples who love each other but are precluded from marrying. Such people may be within the proscribed degrees of relationship, or the woman may be already married and unwilling to leave her husband because of their children. A couple who have taken the brotherhood oath are thenceforth debarred from having sexual relations. To do so would be to commit incest of a particularly bad sort. The ancestral spirits would punish both by death at an early date. After taking the oath the man and woman can be together as much as they wish without scandal. The man can even come and live in her house in the absence of her husband. The only exception to the rule against oath brother and sister having sexual relations is in the case of married people who had lived together for several years without children. The man could not afford a plural wife, so they divorced each other, took the oath of brotherhood, and then each remarried.

Persons who have taken the oath are considered more closely related than even children of the same mother, the closest natural bond. A man stands in the same relation to the relatives of his oath brother as does the brother himself. He calls them by the same relationship terms and is subject to the same marriage restrictions. Other members of the two families feel that a relationship has been established between them and that they owe each other assistance, but their marriages are not restricted. The children of blood brothers are governed by the same marriage regulations as those of real brothers and sisters and this is supposed to extend to their descendants indefinitely. Actually, it seems to be ignored after about the third generation.

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[2] *Ib.,* p. 192.

[3] *Deschamps,* Madagascar, p. 50.

Blood oaths of the parent-child type, found among the Betsileo, are lacking among the Tanala. Both parties are of equal importance in the ceremony and have equal rights and duties thereafter. These are specified in the oath, which is varied to meet the wishes of the participants. The duty of mutual assistance is always included and the oath brothers often agree to hold their property in common. Even when this has not been included in the bond one brother can use the other's property without permission, if the owner is away. In a few cases brothers agree to hold even their wives in common, but this is very rare when both live in the same village. The bond is regarded with the utmost seriousness and it is thought that any infraction will be punished supernaturally. An interesting modern development is that brothers now may promise to help each other with the reservation that the help shall not bring them into conflict with the government. Under this a man can legitimately refuse to help his brother if he is a fugitive from justice.

The ceremony of taking the oath is attended by members of both families and a few non-related men, who act as witnesses. It is supervised by an *ombiasy*. He takes a wooden winnowing tray filled with water and mixes in it wood ashes, rice husks, seven clumps of grass, including the roots, ox dung found in the forest (called "dung of an ox that does not know its mother") and some of the small pellets of earth which are left attached to roots hanging in the air after a bank has fallen. A spear is then held vertically in the bowl, with its point down. Each of the oath takers grasps the spear shaft with his right hand while the *ombiasy* grasps it with his left hand, above the other two. In his right hand the *ombiasy* holds a knife with which he taps the spear shaft lightly and continuously and repeats the following invocation:

"Listen, listen, oh gods! *Zanahary* the male, *Zanahary* the female Rangidina, Rantomoa, Mosofamaky jahana, Beeronerona, Rangamina, Andrangofalafa, Madiovazankoh, Tsimangano no hananga, the gold and the sun! Listen, you others who are in the sky! Man is made from blood which you have made solid and to which you have given life. You have advised us, 'If you have business of any sort, do not forget to tell us.' Since so-and-so and so-and-so [giving names] are about to make an oath of friendship here, you have been called, oh gods, to assist in that oath.

"These are the terms on which they enter the bond: The father, the mother, the property, the money, the cattle, the houses and the wives are henceforth to be held in common. They will redeem each other if one is sold for debt, and help each other in death [i.e., provide money, cattle, rice, etc., for the funeral]. If one of the oath brothers or his family is hungry and he demands help of the other in the name of the oath, and he refuses it, punish him, Gods and sacred oath [the phrase is *Zanahary sy fihananana*]. If one is on the side of the river where the canoe is tied and his oath brother calls him from the other side, wishing to pass over, and he refuses to take him over, observe it and punish him, Gods and sacred oath. If enemies lie in wait to kill one and the other can frustrate them and does not, punish him, Gods and sacred oath. If one fails in his duty because he does not recognize the other, or because it is impossible for him to do what the other asks, do not punish him, Gods and sacred oath. Under all circumstances, if one brother betrays the other may the crocodiles and water spirits [*lolo*] seize him when he crosses water and the lightning strike him when he is on land."

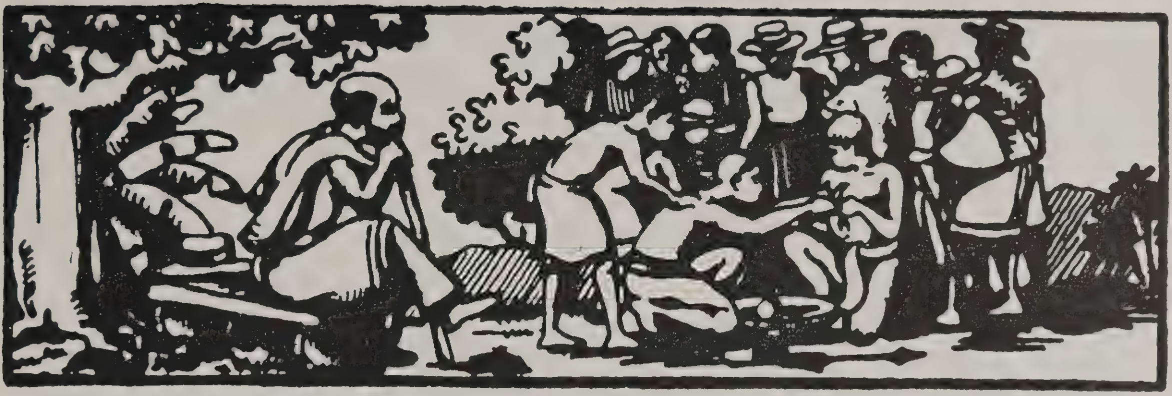
The *ombiasy* then recites the following imprecations on the oath breaker, calling out the number before each curse: "*Iraika* [one]! May his belly swell if he does treason. *Roa* [two]! May all evils happen to the traitor at once. *Telo* [three]! May the lightning break him in three pieces. *Efatra* [four]! May the crocodile devour him. *Dimy* [five]! May sickness slay both him and his family. *Enena* [six]! May his life be suspended between heaven and earth. *Fito* [seven]! May his liver and gall be torn out. *Valo* [eight]! May no remedy save him from death. *Sivy* [nine]! May he be subject to many maladies and may his stomach swell. *Folo* [ten]! May leprosy eat away his fingers and toes."

The *ombiasy* then begins to count again and calls down blessings on the brothers if they keep the oath: "One! May their wealth, goods and children increase. Two! May cattle and honour come to them. Three! May they live in *Zanahary,* the life giver, so that they will never be sick or troubled. Four! May only old age and death separate them from honour, the respect of others and wealth. Five! May money and children come to them. Six! May they have the honour and consideration of others, Oh God, and never be sick or even indisposed. Seven! May this oath bring them good fortune and be useful to them. Eight! May their money never leave them and may cattle enter their pens. Nine! May they and their families live together and never separate."

After this the *ombiasy* invokes the ancestral spirits of the oath brothers, calling them to witness the bond and repeating the entire formula without change. He then makes a small cut over the heart of each with a sharp knife. Each man takes a piece of raw ginger root and smears it with his own blood. They face each other and each covers the other's eyes with his left hand while he places the ginger root in the other's mouth with his right. They do this simultaneously, repeating together: "May you also become blind if you are a traitor to me." The *ombiasy* then takes a leaf of the *longoja* plant and pulls it into two pieces lengthwise, saying: "If either of you is a traitor, may his body be torn in two like this leaf, so that one part will be on the east coast of this island and the other on the west." Half the leaf is laid on the eastern and half on the western side of the house. Then the oath brothers pay the *ombiasy* and witnesses, and name and point out to each other the members of their families.

The above account was obtained from Ratzakoba, an *ombisay* of the Zafindiamanana gens of the Tanala Menabe, and is a description of a particular ceremony which he had himself directed. Accounts obtained from other *ombiasy* indicate that each one has his own formula, although all of these conform to a definite pattern. The use of the rice winnower, grasping of the spear, tapping with the knife, invocation first of the gods and then of the ancestors, and the eating of ginger root smeared with each other's blood, are constant. The materials mixed in the rice winnower, the terms of the contract and the blessings and imprecations are variable. One set of imprecations is as follows:

1. May illness come and slay the traitor.
2. May his liver become diseased and be



Blood-brotherhood, Tanala (after Mattéi).

covered with spots. 3 and 4. Same as in imprecations previously given. 5. May the sickness turn and turn in him, i.e., may it be constantly active and attack all organs. 6. May the malady enter him six times a day. 7. May his gall bladder burst. 8. May the illness, when it comes, kill him before he can drink water, i.e., instantly. 9. May sickness spread through his whole body. 10. May all his limbs be broken.

When a village was captured and reduced to vassalage the heads of the lineages and more important families were required to take an oath of loyalty to the victors. This was identical in content and procedure with the oath of blood brotherhood except that the victors remained unbound. The natives knew of no instance in which the chiefs of two gentes had entered into blood brotherhood to cement an alliance between their followers."[4]

Among the Tanala in southern Ambohimanga a blood-pact might be used not only between friends wishing to strengthen the ties uniting them, but also between consorts desiring to give a more solid foundation to their reciprocal sentiments, says *Mattéi*. This pact might also be entered into between a member of a village and a stranger seeking protection in the clan to which he had introduced himself. And finally, a man to whom a woman refused to accord her favour often requested to be allowed to attach himself to her by this entirely Platonic tie. There could be no marriage between such 'blood-brothers' unless the union had preceded the oath.

The ritual observed for the pact did not differ on the whole from the rite obtaining among the Tanala and referred to above in *Linton*'s version. After a couple of ceremonial acts a cordial conversation followed between the two blood-brothers, where, in order to become better acquainted with each other, they confided secrets and related personal anecdotes. The relations of the blood-brothers were not obliged to pay attention to the pact; but the fathers and the sons, the brothers and sisters of the parties considered themselves as allies.

Mattéi says that through this pact the parties make reciprocal promises of assistance and affection, and he concludes by pointing out that this curious custom is still observed among a number of the primitive populations on Madagascar. The judges of the native tribunals sometimes have to make

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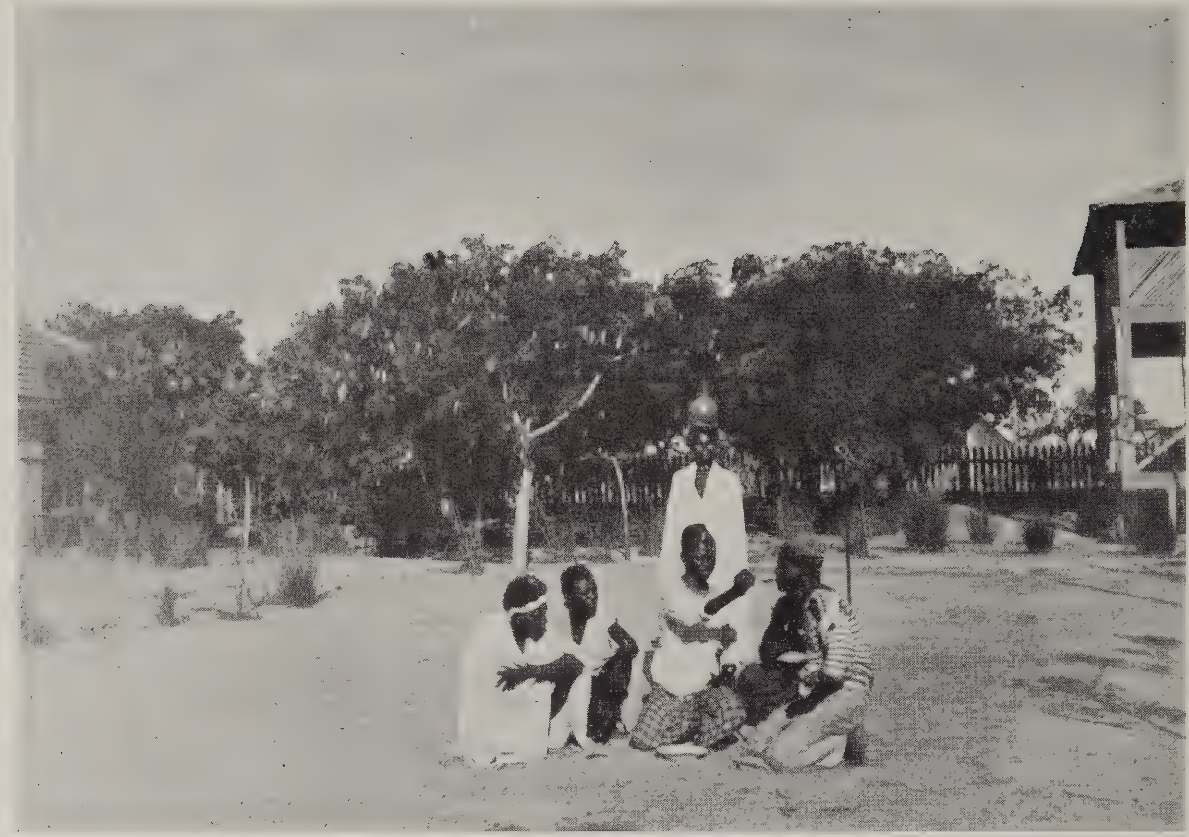
[4] *Linton,* The Tanala, pp. 307 ff.



Blood-brotherhood, Sakalava, the partaking of blood (after Teissonnière, Coll. Musée de l'Homme).

blood-brothers appear before them. They must refrain from obtaining from one of them confessions that would betray the other. It is with a certain melancholy that *Mattéi* finally observes that in only a few years civilization and education will have helped to relegate to the past this Madagascan custom, which was not without its dignity.[5]

A blood-pact of a somewhat unusual kind was made between the king of the Tanala and the king of the Merina. The former sent an envoy with gifts and a drop of his blood to the Merina king, This vested the royal envoy with the power to conclude *fatidra* in place of his master.[6]

On the west coast of Madagascar, among the Sakalava, the blood was mixed with water and fed to the blood-brothers in a spoon (see illustration). A rather curious pact occurred among a sub-tribe, the Antimahilaka, where the queen gave her blood to a European at a blood-mixing ceremony, whereas the European's blood was drunk by the prince consort. In another case, among the Antimena, the queen's speaker acted for her in drinking the European's blood.[7]

The blood-brotherhood among the Bara, in south-western Madagascar, is dealt with by *Julien*. The practice among them was similar to that among the other tribes of

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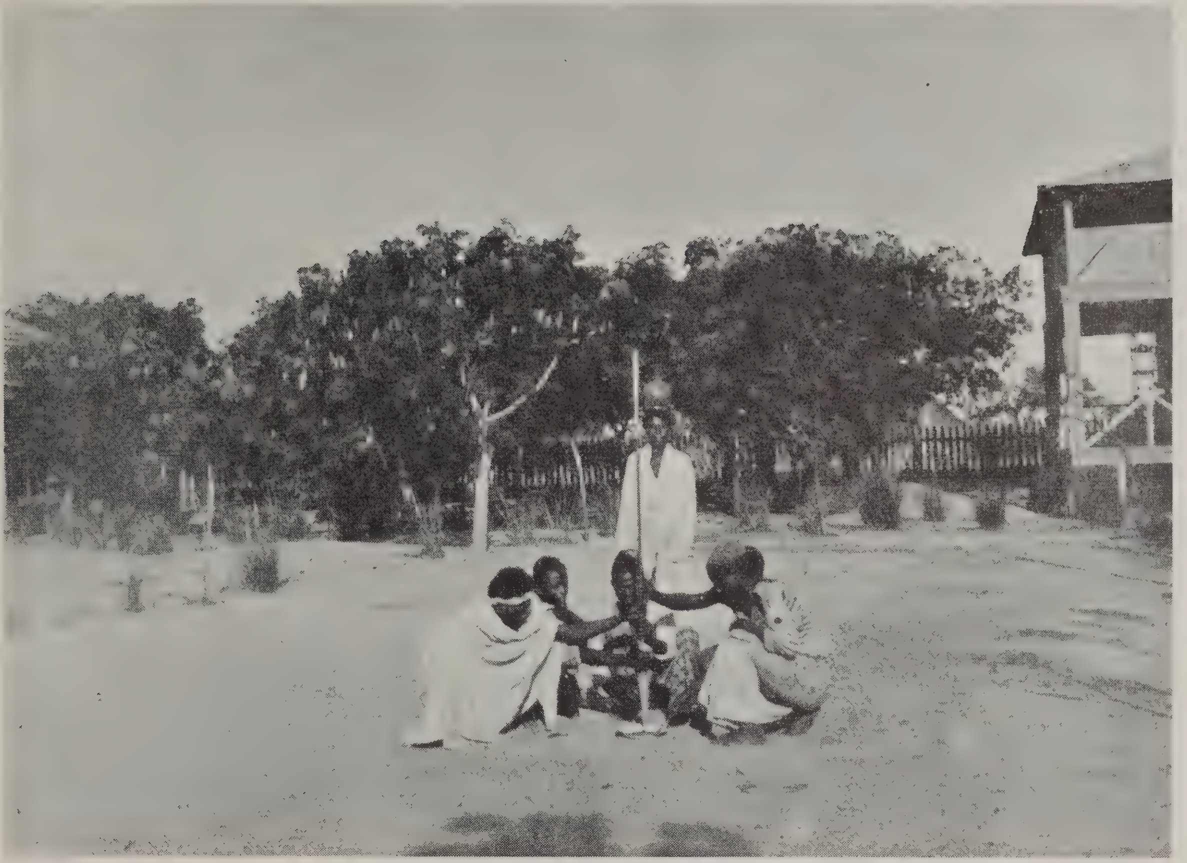
[5] *Mattéi,* Le serment, LRM 1937.

[6] *Besson,* Voyage, p. 328.

[7] *Douliot,* Journal du voyage, pp. 264, 62., Cf. *Kurze,* Das Volk, pp. 119 f.



Blood-brotherhood, Sakalava, the oath (after Teissonnière, Coll. Musée de l'Homme).

the island. The parties pronounced a long imprecation and mutual vow, invoking the gods and ancestors. A small portion of blood was then drawn from each individual and drunk by the covenanting parties with execrations of vengeance on each other in case of either violating the sacred oath, after which the reciprocal duties incumbent on men who had made blood-brotherhood with one another were enunciated. Generally speaking, a man must always support his blood-brother when he was in difficulties, especially when he was in legal difficulties.[8]

The Antaisaka form of the ceremony did not differ notably from that used elsewhere on Madagascar. The purpose of the alliance was to confirm the bonds of old friendship or to make a pact with some definite end in view. It was regarded as creating a fictive kinship between two persons. A blood-brother did not have the right to *kibori,* burial in the collective tomb of the clan, nor did he partake in religious and tribal obligations. The pact was not a permission to enter the social group: it was really an association for common ends guaranteed by a magic oath. Strangers contracted the tie in order to facilitate their business and cattle-thieves were all blood-brothers, to avoid possible denouncement.[9]

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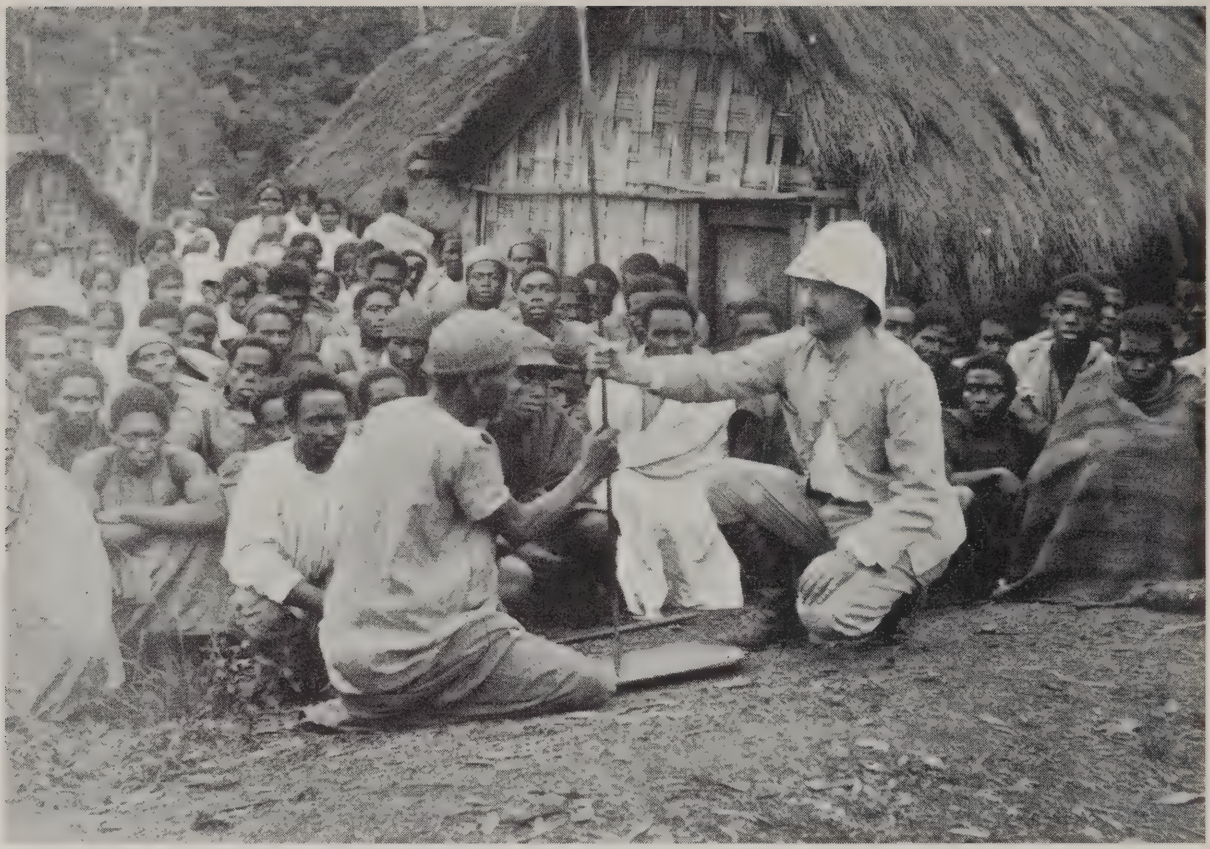
[8] *Julien,* Fate-dra ou fraternisation, pp. 1 ff.

[9] *Deschamps,* Les Antaisaka, pp. 131 f.



Blood-brotherhood, Betsileo (after Teissonnière, Coll. Musé de l'homme).

Grandider gives a full description of the pact and its implications among several tribes: the Sakalava, Betsimisaraka, Merina, Antanosy, and others. The following are some points of particular interest from his account.

The first European to become blood-brother to a member of the Sakalava tribe was a Portuguese missionary in 1619, who entered blood-brotherhood with the king. It is worth noting that *Grandidier* mentions that man and woman could contract such an alliance. There were, of course many variations of the ritual. A particular detail of interest occurred among the Antanosy and elsewhere in the south and south-west, where, as among the Mongols, a few drops of blood were drunk in 'gold water,' water in which some gold object had been dropped.[1]

The Norwegian missionary *Ruud* describes various forms of blood relationship occurring in very recent times amongst some tribes on Madagascar. He divides these relationships into three kinds: relationship by a common meal, blood relationship without oaths, and blood relationship with oaths. Of course, no actual blood is involved in the first case. Two persons—a man and a woman in Ruud's example—become as brothers or brother and sister after declaring their intention and eating together from the same

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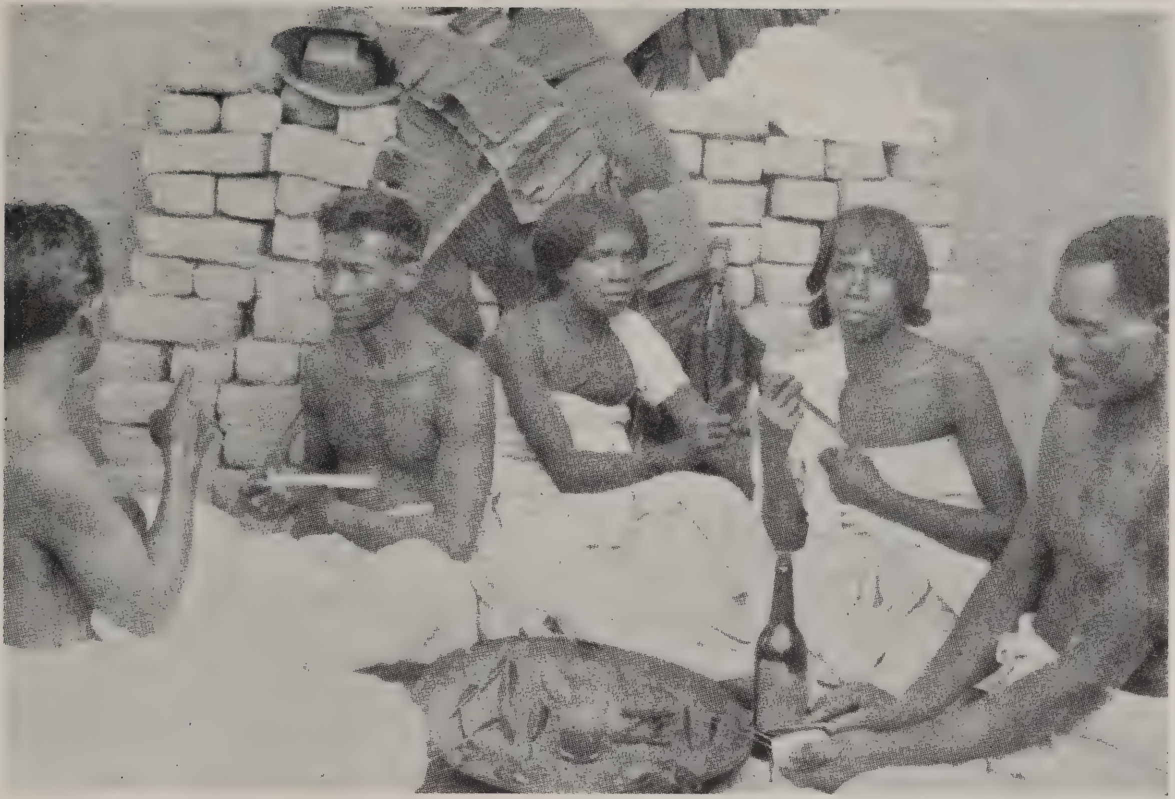
[1] *Grandidier,* Ethnographie de Madagascar, pp. 125, 129 f., 149, 155, 229, 352 f. Cf. *Vinson,* Voyage, pp. 280 ff., *Ransome,* The River, p. 302.



Blood-brotherhood, Betsimisaraka and Tanala (after J. Ruud).

dish together with their families. The second case is somewhat similar, although the undertaking is more solemn, involving choice of a special day, plighting of mutual help in many contingencies while small pieces of root-ginger are eaten, and finally a feast to celebrate the brotherhood.

The third relationship is a true blood-brotherhood, and much more serious both in the actual ceremony and from the point of view of the vengeance incurred from the god, Zanahari, and the spirits of the ancestors if either party breaks the oath. *Ruud* gives a detailed description of the scene, the swearing of oaths, and so on. The actual exchange of blood is accomplished by the master-of-ceremonies cutting the two participants on the chest, whereupon one dips his seven ingredients in his blood and puts them in the mouth of the other, who swallows them and afterwards returns the compliment. Various ritualistic details follow, including the holding of a spear shaft together while the master-of-ceremonies relates the blessings of the pact over them.[2]

Blood-brotherhood on the islands of Nossi-Bé and Mayotte, near Madagascar, was established, according to *Walter,* by a ceremony reminiscent of Madagascan forms. A witch-doctor presided, and concocted a mixture of powdered dog-bone, chopped grasshopper and water in a wooden platter. He dipped a spear-point in the mixture a few times in the presence of the families gathered round, accompanying his gestures by prayers to the god and the dead. Then he advanced upon the brothers-to-be, as if to wound them severely in the foreheads with the spear. Seven times the motion was repeated, and when a little blood was drawn, the two men drank one another's blood. The witch-doctor presented a leaf to each of them and, addressing them, said "If you are untrue to your pledge, may you be broken as this leaf," whereupon he broke the leaf and threw it on the ground.

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[2] *Ruud,* Guder og fedre, pp. 63 ff.

The same author also mentions another kind of blood-mixing. In this case the blood was taken from the pit of the stomach. The bond involved mutual aid but not the right of inheritance. It could also be contracted with a stranger.[3]

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[3] *Walter,* Die Inseln Nossi-Bé, p. 365.

CHAPTER III

Summary and concluding remarks

Let us begin by considering some problems which have perhaps been the main points of controversy in interpreting the institution of blood-brotherhood. These concern the nature of the bond uniting blood-brothers, whether it is really a bond of true kinship, whether it is based upon magical principles or the mechanism of the curse, whether it is constituted by a change of status or by a simple contract.

As regards the relation of the blood bond to the bond of true kinship, there are two main schools of thought: one which holds that kinship is based on community of blood, and the other which says that community of blood is a Western concept and thus unprimitive.[1] It cannot be denied that the facts of blood-brotherhood in Africa and elsewhere seem to support the second school. Generally speaking, the African does not regard kinship as a community of blood. We might almost certainly search in vain for an instance where kinship is referred to in terms of blood. When the African speaks of members of the same clan as sprung from the same seed, this does not at all mean that clansmen are of the same blood.

To illustrate this point we may chose one of the many possible examples. The example is taken from the Bambara, who conceive of blood in the following way. The blood and the breath contain the essence of life, and the blood is the vehicle for physical and spiritual forces, which circulate with it through the veins and arteries. The sacrifice of blood liberates these forces and they enter into the altars, the soil, or the persons who receive it. The bright colour of blood is proof of its purity; all misdeeds lead to modification, making the blood paler. Certain alliances are consecrated by the exchange of blood. However, it is not the actual blood which is the embodiment of descent. The blood does transmit certain life principles, but the individual receives these principles at parturition. It is then, says *Dieterlen,* that the individual is first subject to the relations which unite him with the social group to which he is to belong. The new-born child inherits these principles direct from someone who has died just before the child's birth.[2] The filiation is thus not spoken of as one of blood, and there is no idea of artificially creating bonds of kinship by transfusion of blood.

It may be asked why a man will not exchange blood with a fellow clansman, as *Evans-Pritchard* observed to be the case among the Zande. He was never told that this depended on the fact that they were of the same blood, but that it was because they were kinsmen, i.e. already bound to one another by the sociological ties of kinship. However, we have seen that elsewhere transfusion of blood between members of the same family could occur, which is evidence that kinship in these cases was not thought of as a community of blood. Among the Ziba, there was a father who made a blood-pact with his daughter, and according to an account from the Djaga, when the chief abdicated he summoned the people, and in the course of the blood-brotherhood ritual which he celebrated with his successor and son he announced that the latter should take over the government of the tribe. The ceremony required the king to cut his arm, and the son sucked up the blood of his royal sire.[3] This would be meaningless, of course, if the transfusion of blood were intended to create a kinship.

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[1] See above pp. 12 ff.

[2] *Dieterlen,* La religion, pp. 83 f., *Id.,* La personne chez les Bambara, pp. 47 ff., Cf. *De Ganay,* Aspects de mythologie, pp. 196 f.

It would be interesting to investigate the linguistic question of possible connections between words used for blood and terms used for kinship. It is outside the scope of this book to take up such an extensive question. Let it suffice to consider a few particular examples. We have mentioned that the Acoli word for blood is *reèmu,* which was used in connection with the blood-pact, or rather, in phrases such as 'to make friends with' or 'to reject friendship.'[4] But it was not used to indicate that persons were of the same kin. Among the Nyima and Dilling Nuba they have a blood-pact which is called *wuli,* lit. 'blood,' a pact which entailed intermarriage between the rain-maker clan Maryama and the Hawazma Arabs in the Dilling district.[5] The Zande used the word *kure* or *kule* 'blood' in such expressions as *gbakule* 'to cut blood' or *bakurëmi* 'my blood brother,' the latter word used as a term of adress. In its primary sense this term of address referred to the person who had drunk the speaker's blood, but it was extended in a secondary sense to embrace all members of this man's clan. "Thus if you exchange blood with a member of the Akowe clan all other members of this clan rank as your blood-brothers and you may properly adress them as *bakurëmi,* though whether you will actually address them by this term depends on a variety of individual factors such as the conditions under which you are speaking and the degree of intimacy which exists between you and the man whom you are addressing. It follows that a man stands in the position of blood-brother to clans with individual members of which his kin have exchanged blood. The word is commonly extended in a tertiary sense as a term of address to persons with whom neither the speaker nor any of his kin have exchanged blood, a courtesy usage which implies friendly familiarity. These extensions are made in the same way as kinship terms are extended to embrace whole clans and even quite unrelated persons and, in my opinion, the sociological and psychological significance of these extensions is the same in both cases. The extension of the obligations of blood-brotherhood from a blood-brother to members of his clan and the use of blood as the material link between the two partners have given rise to theories which stress the collective nature of the pact as an alliance between two blood groups."[6] Concerning the Swazi, *Kuper* says that it is impossible to make a single cultural abstraction of the significance of blood: its significance depends entirely on varying social situations. Blood *per se* has no special mystic significance; ties of consanguinity are ignored and kinship ties are artificially created. The transfusion of blood from one person to another imposes sociological obligations distinct from those associated with kinship. In another passage the same author emphasises that "the use of the term 'one blood' to cover those with whom there is no physiological tie, and also to exclude some with whom there is, implies that the Swazi, like the Zande, think of kinship primarily in terms of sociological function; but, on the other hand, they express kinship relationship in terms of physiological identity, even though they do not base their particular behaviour patterns on the facts of physical relationship. Kinship obligations depend chiefly on contiguity, on day-to-day relationships, but are fictionalized as blood ties. The question is not merely academic, for on it turns not only the mechanism of kinship and hereditary succession and such phenomena as blood-brotherhood, but also many of the allied mystical or supra-secular values of kingship, and the principle of hereditary rank."[7]

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[3] See above, pp. 63, 79.

[4] *Crazzolara,* A Study, pp. 375 f.

[5] *Nadel,* The Nuba, pp. 395, 454.

[6] *Evans-Pritchard,* Zande blood-brotherhood, pp. 370 f.

It is appropriate in this connection to refer to some remarks of *Radcliffe-Brown,* who mentions that the term consanguinity is sometimes used as an equivalent of 'kinship,' and that this word has certain dangerous implications which must be avoided. Consanguinity refers properly to a physical relationship, but in kinship we have to deal with a specifically social relationship.[8]

Another question of interest is whether or not there is any notion of sociological identification between clan brothers and blood-brothers. It is true that many of the obligations of blood-brotherhood are the same as those of real brotherhood, but this cannot be regarded as proof that the artificial relationship is modelled on the natural one. There are only a limited number of ways in which members of a primitive community can assist one another, and since kinship almost invariably involves these modes of social assistance, it is obvious that the obligations of blood-brotherhood must often coincide with those of kinship. But a man must sometimes help his blood-brother in ways which are quite different from the assistance due from kin. This may be illustrated by some examples. *Lindblom* states that among the Kamba, if one of the blood-brothers is a party in a law suit, or if he is charged with some crime, the other appears at the trial even if he has important affairs of his own to see to.[9] Among the Ganda a blood-brother could not refuse the payment of a heavy fine or debt, or the concealment of a fugitive from justice. *Lucy Mair* points out that the blood-brotherhood took precedence of kinship, in that a murderer might count on finding refuge with a blood-brother even if the latter was a relative of his victim, and one informant said that the blood-brother might even give himself up to be killed in the place of his friend.[1] Among the Sandawe a blood-brother had to pay the other's debts, and among the Djaga the reason for an illegal *mma* was common knowledge of a secret, such as theft, the safeguarding of one's life, and so on.[2] A blood-brother among the Zande had to help to bury dead members of a clan with which he had exchanged blood and into which he had married. The dead's kin took no part in digging the grave and refrained from carrying the corpse. In ritual exchange at mortuary feasts blood-brothers and relatives-in-law formed one party and exchanged wealth with the kin who formed the other party. Kin could not exchange wealth with each other on these occasions. It was a blood-brother who cut open a corpse to see if witchcraft was present. No kinsman could perform this task.[3]

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[7] *Kuper,* An African Aristocracy, pp. 106 f.

[8] *Radcliffe-Brown,* African Systems of Kinship, p. 4.

[9] See above, p. 53.

[1] See above p. 86.

[2] See above, pp. 72, 62.

The absolute equality of blood-brothers is a general characteristic of blood-brotherhood. It is, of course, possible to find a few cases to the contrary; we will give some examples later on. Let us first begin with what is said about the equality of blood-brothers among the Zande: "Another striking difference between brotherhood and blood-brotherhood is the fact that brothers are graded while blood-brothers are on an absolute equality. A man is not simply 'brother' to another, but he is either 'elder brother' or 'younger brother,' and the younger always owes respect to the elder. Intercourse between brothers is always coloured by notions of seniority. We have seen, on the other hand, how blood-brothers have an egalitarian status and treat each other with open familiarity across the usual barriers of etiquette which Zande custom erects between members of society. Hence the behaviour pattern between a man and his brother is incompatible with the behaviour pattern between a man and his blood-brother and a man cannot therefore be a kinsman and a blood-brother. We have, moreover, seen that the sanctions of a pact involve members of the mother's kin, which is in direct opposition to the clan theory. There is thus no identification of social function between blood-brothers and clansmen, any more than there is physiological identification through communion of blood. A man takes over none of the titles of clanship by exchange of blood. He does not adopt the clan-name of his blood-brother nor his totems. If he became in any sense a member of his blood-brother's clan, he would be subject to their rules of exogamy, whereas, on the contrary, we have seen that it is considered highly commendable for a man to marry his blood-brother's sister or daughter. No one would deny that the obligations of blood-brotherhood are coloured by the obligations of kinship and family, since all human groups are deeply affected by the fact that a man is born and grows up in his family and that his main social attitudes towards family and kin are built up long before he joins adult associations or forms new patterns of behaviour towards unrelated persons, such as chiefs and parents-in-law, but this is a very different notion from the idea of a blood-brother changing his status so that he becomes reckoned as kin to kin to his partner and his partner's clansmen."[4]

However, there are cases where there is not such an absolute equality: between the king of the Nyoro and his cooks, who were his blood-brothers, or the Swazi king and his tinsila, for instance. *Kuper* elaborates this point: "Whereas in most primitive societies the covenant is open to all tribesmen, among the Swazi it is a prerogative of leading men, more particularly of the king. In other tribes there is a wide range from whom to choose the partner, whereas among the Swazi the choice is delimited by clan membership. Usually it is a voluntary pact, but among the

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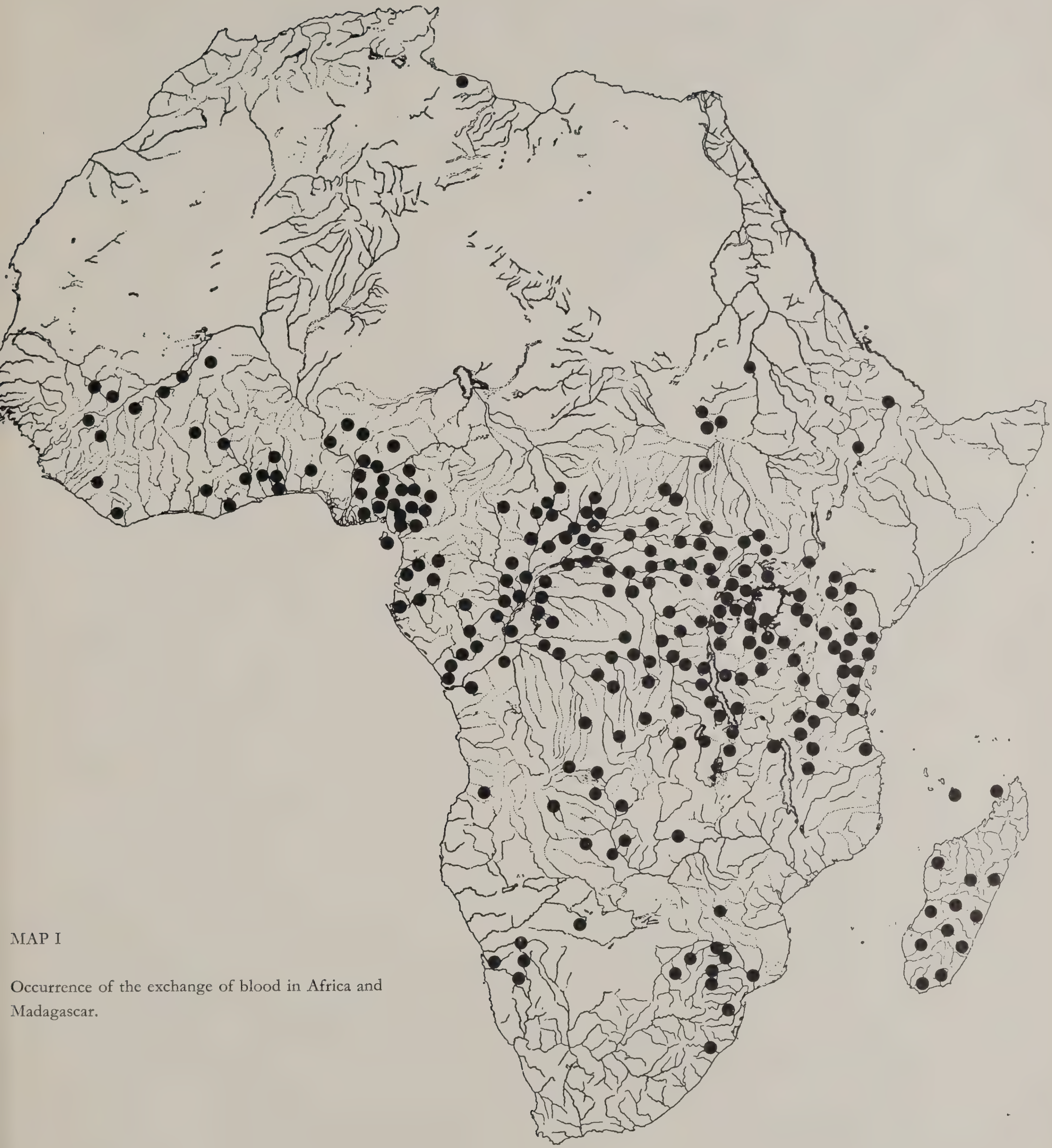
[3] *Evans-Pritchard,* op. cit. p. 398.

[4] *Ib,* op. cit. pp. 398 f.



MAP I

Occurrence of the exchange of blood in Africa and Madagascar.

Swazi it is a compulsory bond. Elsewhere an oath is essential, whereas among the Swazi no verbal pledge is taken. It is usually entered into between people of the same sex and status, whereas among the Swazi it is between people of different status and of opposite as well as of the same sex. Despite these differences, reciprocal obligations are imposed by all the pacts and the varying nature of the obligations depends on the structure of the societies. Unequal obligations are imposed on the Swazi partners who are of different rank. The blood does not equalize the status. The Swazi 'union' is essentially a ritual that protects the king and helps to maintain the hierarchical society that he represents. This is further illustrated by the attenuation of the custom among clan heads. What was originally a widespread cultural element received special emphasis in the case of the king — just as other aspects of the kingship are accentuations of usages relating to clan heads generally."[5] Another example of 'inequality' is found among the Nyanyembe, where the blood-brotherhood did not by any means necessarily imply social equality as a result, for the elder of the contracting parties enjoyed complete social supremacy over his blood-brother.[6]

Blood-brotherhood is sometimes contrasted with kinship, although there are differing opinions as to their relative value. Usually a blood-brother was regarded as a better friend than a real brother. But the Ruanda, for instance, considered that friendship was better than blood-brotherhood.[7]

It was mentioned in the above quotation about the Zande that it is considered highly commendable for a man to marry his blood-brother's sister or daughter. It is evident that the Zande are exceptional in this, since both in Africa and elsewhere the contrary was generally the case. There are, of course, a few exceptions which can be added to the Zande case. For instance, among the Gogo, marriage between children of blood-brothers was not forbidden, and among the Haja it was possible for a man to marry a relative of his blood-brother after a special ceremony.[8] Nothing is said about this question in many of our instances of blood-brotherhood, but, as already mentioned, blood-brotherhood usually implied a prohibition of marriage. It might be concluded from this that a man is in general bound by the rules of exogamy of his blood-brother's clan, but this conclusion is obviously not applicable in all cases. It seems reasonable to account in some measure for such an exceptional case as that of the Zande in the way that *Evans-Pritchard* does. He says that the obligations of blood-brotherhood are undeniably coloured by the obligations of kinship and family, but that this is not at all the same as the idea that a blood-brother changes his status so that he becomes reckoned as kin to kin to his partner's clansmen.[9]

Sometimes the blood-brotherhood was contracted between individuals and sometimes between groups. Both forms of pact were practised among many tribes. Among others —for instance the Djaga—only groups could enter into the compact; private persons, according to *Gutmann,* were not entitled to become blood-brothers. In cases where individuals wished to safeguard their fate and their endeavours by means of a special alliance of blood-brotherhood, they acted in

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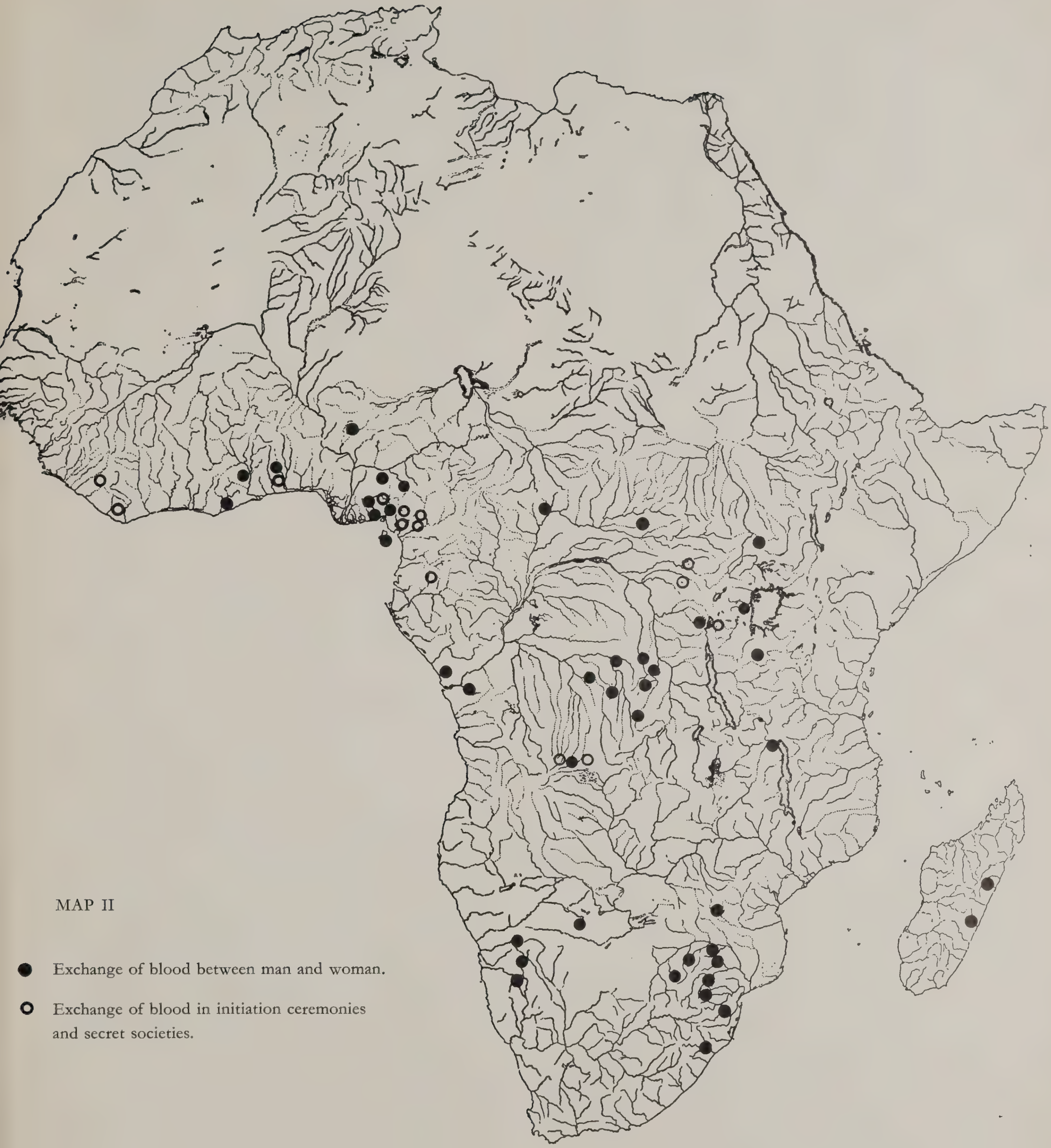
[5] *Kuper,* An African Aristocracy, p. 84.

[6] See above, p. 77.

[7] See above, p. 80.

[8] See above, pp. 72, 79.

[9] *Evans-Pritchard,* op. cit. p. 399.



MAP II

● Exchange of blood between man and woman.

○ Exchange of blood in initiation ceremonies and secret societies.

contradiction to a natural law of society and against the interests of their respective groups. The private blood-brotherhood was a corruption phenomenon and the main characteristic of such a bond was its secrecy and culpability. *Raum* states that the Djaga blood-brotherhood was a state institution, and therefore required the king's permission.[1] In yet other tribes—among the Sango, for instance—the pact was reserved exclusively for blood-brotherhood between an individual belonging to the tribe and a stranger. Only individuals could contract blood-brotherhood among the Zande.[2]

One outstanding aim of blood-pacts is quite evident if we make a general survey of examples taken both from Africa and elsewhere, from the days of Herodotus down to our own time. That is the aim of concluding peace. In other cases, groups made blood-pacts for purposes of non-aggression, or to make an alliance for aggressive war. The same notion underlies the blood-pact and oaths of those making a league or conspiracy. Individuals became blood-brothers to secure mutual aid from one another; besides the general obligations of hospitality incurred, this included help in case of misfortune and legal difficulties, assistance at the burial of a blood-brother, revenge for murder, and a host of other obligations, varying according to the particular case. Some individual blood-brotherhoods were solely for commercial purposes, undertaken by a traveller to obtain an ally who would protect him in a foreign country. *Lindblom* gives an interesting instance of this: "When the Akamba used to pass to and from the coast for trading purposes, the cunning Swahili and Arab traders used to profit by this custom, by entering into blood-brotherhood with them, and then the Akamba would sell their ivory cheap to their new kinsmen. Although they had reached a higher stage of civilisation, this was the only way in which the people of the coast could cheat the "washenzi" ('the savages'), for the latter possessed too much business capacity. But the otherwise greedy Akamba's conception of the significance of blood-brotherhood caused them to lose sight of their own advantage."[3] In this connection it is also worth noting that *Cameron* was of the opinion that the blood-pact was of Semitic origin, introduced into Africa by the Arabs trading there.[4]

The blood used in the rite of blood-brotherhood has a magical significance. It is not so much the vehicle of the spell or curse as the material element of a magical complex, its association with the curse and the rite often making it the 'medicine' *par préférence.* Sometimes the blood plays the part of the avenger for breach of faith, but in other cases it does not at all have this significance—for instance, on Madagascar, where the god was invoked to wreak vengeance for breaking the oath. A consideration of some of the forms of dissolution for blood-pacts may also throw some light on the rôle of the blood—despite the fact that the blood bond was in general regarded as eternal, it could be dissolved in certain eventualities. The dissolution was not accomplished by operating on the blood. These was, of course, a case among the Lango where a dose of apomorphia was injected into the cicatrix to make the man vomit the 'blood.' But that was exceptional: the dissolution was usually much simpler. Among the Banyanwezi the elders had only to judge the case, and among the Sango all that was required was certain economic settlements. Among the Kaonde and the Lunda it could be dissolved by a civil law suit brought by one of the parties who happened to be dissatisfied with the material benefits that had accrued or had failed to accrue to him.[5]

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[1] See above, pp. 54, 62.

[2] See above, pp. 74, 123 ff.

[3] *Lindblom,* The Akamba, p. 141.

[4] *Cameron,* Across Africa, I. pp. 33 f.

We saw that both in Africa and elsewhere, man and wife sometimes exchanged blood. The distribution of this custom is given in Map 2, and is primarily concentrated in the south and west, and in Madagascar. The object was usually to strengthen the marriage bond, but in south-eastern Africa it was mainly connected with the idea of 'hot blood,' especially in the remarriage of a widow or widower. In the Congo region, the custom is important for monogamous marriage, and it may be that it owes some of its persistence to the encouragement received from missionaries. Arab influence tends to have the opposite effect, their marital taste being different, of course. Some authors contend that this custom is of later origin that the blood-pact between men.[6] That may be so, but as far as the notion of 'hot blood' is concerned it is probably not true, for that belief appears to be a genuine old African conception.

Several authors have pointed out that the so-called 'joking relationship' was closely associated with the blood-pact.[7]

The blood-brotherhood also found application among secret societies and in initiation ceremonies, in China and the Pacific islands, as well as in Africa, where this was especially true of the Congo region and the north-west. It is clear that these rites were closely connected with the scarifications for tribal marks, and it is also evident that they helped to raise the status of the youth with respect to the representatives of the tribe. It may have the same significance in the secret society as in a conspiracy.

It is obviously possible to speculate over various associations between the occurrence of blood-pacts in Africa and other parts of the world. *Ellis* pointed out a resemblance between the forms practised in Madagascar and Indonesia. There is also a noticeable similarity between the Gypsy ritual at marriage and that used in some parts of India on similar occasions. Another tempting analogy is that of the mingling of blood between man and wife in India, Madagascar and Africa, but great caution is clearly necessary with such hypotheses. *Tully's* account of the blood-brotherhood between the Bey of Tunis and another Arab dignitary is a clear instance of the practice among North African Arabs, and it is evident that the Arabs brought blood-brotherhood to certain parts of Africa where they traded, while their influence is also apparent in the corruption of monogamous marriage by exchange of blood in the Congo region.[8]

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[5] See above, pp. 74, 78, 99.

[6] *Baumann,* Lunda, p. 133; *Frobenius,* FAA 1: 3; See above, p. 140.

[7] *Radcliffe-Brown,* On Joking, pp. 207 ff.; See above, pp. 144.

[8] See above, pp. 31, 38, 102.

ABBREVIATIONS

A	Anthropos
AEB	Anthropos Ethnologische Bibliothek
AEO	Archives d'Études Orientales
AF	Africa
AFA	Archiv für Anthropologie
AL	Annali Lateranensi
AMCB	Annales du Musée du Congo Belge
APS	Acta Philologica Scandinavica
ARW	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft
ASKM	African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, London 1950, ed. by A. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde
AT	L. Frobenius, Atlantis
AU	Am Urquell
BA	Baessler-Archiv
BABH	Baessler-Archiv, Beiheft
BHS	Bulletin du comité d'études historiques et scientifiques de l'Afrique Occ. Française
BSBG	Bulletin de la Société Royale Belge de Géographie
BSEC	Bulletin de la Société d'Études Camerounaises
BSGA	Bulletin de la Société de Géographie d'Anvers
BSGP	Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Paris
BSRC	Bulletin de la Société des Recherches Congolaises
C	Congo
CK	Custom is King. Essays pres. to R. R. Marett, London 1936
CME	Collection des Monographies Ethnographiques
DA	Das Ausland
ELAP	Publications de l'École des Lettres d'Alger
ETN	Ethnographia-Népélet
FAA	Frobenius, Atlas Africanus, München 1921
F	Folk-Lore
FMHA	Field Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Series
FO	Folkliv
G	Globus
GJ	The Geographical Journal
GSJ	Royal Geographical Society, Journal
GSP	Royal Geographical Society, Proceedings
HS	Hakluyt Society, Publications
IRBS	Institut Royal Colonial Belge, Mémoires, Coll. in –8
IRBM	Institut Royal Colonial Belge, Mémoires, Coll. in –4
JAI	Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute
JAS	Journal of the African Society
JGLS	Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society
JMGS	Journal of the Manchester Geographical Society
JP	Journal de Psychologie normale et pathologique
KDGA	Korrespondenzblatt der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte

LA	L'Antropologie
LAA	Les Annales Apostoliques
LCI	Le Congo illustré
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LRM	La Revue de Madagascar
M	Man
MAGD	Mitteilungen der Afrikanischen Gesellschaft in Deutschland
MBB	Missions-Blatt der Brüdergemeinde
MC	Les Missions Catholiques
MCC	Margaret Mead, Cooperation and Competition, New York 1937
MDS	Mitteilungen aus den Deutschen Schutzgebieten
MGGJ	Mitteilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft in Jena
MME	Petit Messager des Missions Evangéliques
MSI	Mouvement Sociologique International
MSOB	Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen
MSOBB	Mitt. des Sem. für Oriental. Sprachen, Beiheft
NQ	Notes and Queries
PELO	Publications de l'École des langues orientales vivantes
PHS	Publications du comité d'études historiques et scientifiques de l'Afrique Occ. Française
PM	Petermanns Mitteilungen
PMEH	Petermanns Mitteilungen, Ergänzungsheft
PRSE	Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society, Edinburgh
QR	Quellen der Religions-Geschichte
RC	La Revue Congolaise
RVAO	Steinmetz, S. R., Rechtsverhältnisse von eingeborenen Völkern in Afrika und Ozeanien, Berlin 1903
RVV	Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten
SAJS	South African Journal of Science
SEU	Studia Ethnographica Upsaliensia
SFLV	Staatlich-Sächsisches Forschungsinstitut für Völkerkunde
SFOM	Société Finno-ougrienne. Mémoires
SNR	Sudan Notes and Records
SMJ	The Sarawak Museum Journal
TM	Le Tour du Monde
TMIE	Travaux et mémoires de l'Institut d'ethnologie, Paris
TIS	Travaux de l'Institut de Sociologie, Bruxelles
UJ	Uganda Journal
VGEB	Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin
WRL	Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories at the Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum. Fourth Report, vol. B
Z	Zaire
ZE	Zeitschrift für Eingeborenensprachen
ZAOS	Zeitschrift für Afrikanische und Oceanische Sprachen
ZFE	Zeitschrift für Ethnologie
ZFR	Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft

See Addenda p. 182

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ERRATA AND ADDENDA

pp. 32 f. for *Moestaert* read *Mostaert*
p. 49 n. 1 for *Reinish* read *Reinisch*
p. 80 for *Chekanowski* read *Czekanowski*
p. 96 for *Wanderer* read *Wandrer*

Addenda to Abbreviations:

BJIC	Bulletin des jurisdictions indigènes et du droit coutumier congolais
ERE	Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics
JVEM	Jahresber. für d. Vereins für Erdkunde zu Metz
ML	Museum Lessianum
UCPAE	University of California Publications in American Archeology and Ethnology

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Addenda to pp. 95 f. and 101 ff.:

An exchange of blood at Tswana marriage ceremonies is mentioned by *Willoughby* (Notes on the Totemism of the Becwana, JAI 35/1905 pp. 311 ff.). The husband and wife cut each other slightly under the navel, and each of them rubbed his or her blood mixed with 'medicine' into the other's wound. That completed the purification of the woman, and the pair might now proceed with the rest of the rite.

Among the Luba there was a blood rite in connection with initiation into the secret societies (BJIC 1940 p. 221).

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